

PROPOSITION FEASIBILITY STUDY RESEARCH PAPER



skink

"TATTOOING IS ABOUT PERSONALIZING
THE BODY, MAKING IT A TRUE HOME
AND FIT TEMPLE FOR THE SPIRIT
THAT DWELLS INSIDE IT."



- MICHELLE DELIO, "TATTOO: THE EXOTIC
ART OF SKIN DECORATION"

CONTENTS

PROPOSITION

Introduction

Subject issue

Nature of business

Target audience

The Brand

Critical design analysis

The Looking Glass

The Optic Glass House

Casa Blanca

Site Context

Location and Site Analysis

Building analysis

Conclusion

FEASIBILITY

Introduction

The Site

The Brief

Block Planning

Surveys and Authorities

Consultants

Timescales

Cost Estimates and Fees

Procurement

Tendering Package

Handover and Completion

Summary

References and Bibliography

RESEARCH PAPER

PROPOSITION

INTRODUCTION

Interior design practice has become a valued practice in making the common experiences within our everyday lives more comfortable, memorable and emotional. Design has established its place way beyond residential spaces, through commercial, public and even institutional spaces. Hospitality, retail, education, workplace, theatre and exhibit sectors are all benefiting greatly from what designers have to offer, however certain practices have yet to discover the immense potential a professionally designed interior can have. The tattoo industry is one of those practices.

While the interest in the tattoo and piercing industry has grown enormously over the past few decades and is currently a very desirable service, tattoo studios designed by professionals are as rare as ever. The rich culture, intriguing history and wide diversity of artistic styles behind tattoos offer a well of infinite possibilities for interiors to communicate artists' nature and develop brand loyalty in their clients. Ultimately, interiors can also play a big part in burying the stigma and prejudices around receiving this type of service.

This project recognizes the lack of a tattoo studio in Newcastle upon Tyne which users can trust with consistent quality of execution, but also one that artists can trust to continuously offer the necessary environment to nourish their creativity in order to deliver said quality.

The aim of this project is to create an environment which considers all things tattoo and piercing, delivering quality service through various spatial settings. One that provides a great range of services, from tattoo design and execution to aftercare and even removal. One that also provides an educational element, an exhibition/events space for hosting tattoo conventions and a small range of retail products.

While chasing international appeal, by offering possibilities for guest artists and addressing worldwide issues within the industry, this space will be designed to deliver the best tattoo experience in town.

SUBJECT ISSUE

The tattoo industry has come a long way towards societal acceptance over the past decade, however it is still widely considered by many a poor, dangerous and impulsive life choice.

Unfair prejudices towards the industry limit its evolution as well as the respect and deserved recognition of many artists' phenomenal work. Such include associations with gang and criminal behavior from clients, as well as lack of a serious approach and hygiene from artists.

Other types of issues in the industry also include artists' design ownership, plagiarism, trend conformity, lack of support towards younger talents and artistry development. Many artists have had to adjust their personal style and often even disregard it completely in order to conform to trends and keep their businesses relevant.



According to abstract contemporary tattoo artist Rex Morris, tattoos are meant to endow body-ownership and this line of work can be influential on mental health awareness, transformation and reclamation. **Rex confirms he has a relationship with tattoos as a creator and as a wearer separately.** As a creator he has artistic and aesthetic driving forces for his work, while as a wearer **tattoos are strongly tied with one's sense of self determination and autonomy, a medicine for dysmorphia and dysphoria.** Many of his clients are socially oppressed victims of self-harm or institutional violence. **Scar blackout coverups** are a big part of his practice, ranging from self-harm trauma to domestic violence to gender affirming surgery. **Victims of such incidents want to reclaim their scars, as a deliberate and constructive choice, and wear them as a piece of art.**



TATTOO ARTIST REX MORRIS' OPINION ON THE FUTURE OF TATTOO INDUSTRY.

"For the last few decades, the trends in tattooing have been defined by the demand of the client base. To me, it feels like we're on this sort of bleeding edge in the art form where there's new room to subvert what has become mainstream. There are exponentially more voices constantly creating and sharing new schools of thought, many of whom are self-taught and had to invent or discover every part of their practice. **I'm excited to see artists and collectors continue to subvert, the way the best tattooing always has.**

I hope that the artists trying to push the medium forward and pouring everything they have into being good at it stop getting dismissed as scratchers for working independently, while toxic street shops get away with endangering their clients and exploiting their employees. I hope we can whittle away some of the copy cats so we don't have to wade through hundreds of the same tattoo online every day."



"DIRTY
BUSINESS"

NATURE OF BUSINESS

In order to deliver the best tattoo and piercing experience in Newcastle, SKINK has to offer new elements to the market, powerful enough to compete with other businesses. The brand's USP is to provide the safest, most comfortable environment for skin treatments, attractive to both customers and employees.

SKINK will start out by recruiting experienced artists, to work with small numbers of clients, ensuring an attentive one on one experience.

Gradually, the artists can start to host workshops, delivering classes to aspiring local talents. Depending on demand, those can be hosted on weekends monthly or even weekly, providing the local community with a suitable environment to develop their talents.

By having artists share their years of experience with the fresh eyes of newer generations, SKINK will support the industry's progress in perfecting styles which are attractive to the current market.

Following this model, a progressive change in the Newcastle tattoo scene can be achieved, creating opportunities for SKINK to expand its success outside of Newcastle and maybe even attract renowned international artists to tattoo and piercing conventions yearly.

In case such events start to become successful, a more open plan area will be provided on site. This area will normally function as an exhibition element, educating consumers in the diverse culture and history of the industry, however it will be designed as a very flexible and adaptable space to host larger events if needed.

The brand will also include a retail element along with the skin treatments, including branded merchandise, partnerships with aftercare products, tattoo tools and vintage clothing suppliers to promote reuse and donation.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Demographic profile

The nature of the project is to provide Newcastle with a tattoo and piercing environment that offers the best experience for both customers and employees. Having said that, SKINK will mainly target the demographic audience of young adults (18-35y) of all race, gender, education and marital status. The brand aims to elevate the experience of receiving a treatment to higher level, not particularly luxurious, but an exclusive one. Hence, by choosing an adequate price point to the quality of the service, customers of lower social classes and limited income will be excluded from the targeted audience.



Psychographic profile

Target audiences are also characterized by behaviour, taking into account people's lifestyle, personality, opinions and interests.

The brand will target a combined market of:

Reformer

They seek enlightenment.

- Creative, curious, tolerant
- Free, open, unpredictable
- Anti-materialistic, favor simplicity
- Support newer brands.

Explorer

They seek adventure.

- Experimental, unconventional
- Risk-taking
- Tribal nature
- Enjoy crazy, surreal presentation.

Succeeder

They value control.

- Goal oriented
- Endurance and stability
- Complex but tidy
- Enjoy diagrams of progress

Mainstream

They seek security.

- Family and home
- Organisation and order
- Require social proof
- Price conscious

Taking into account those four types' behavioural patterns, SKINK will have to appeal as a brand that offers enlightenment, discovery, control and security.

THE BRAND

The brand's identity will be one that stands for change, opportunity and freedom of expression. The brand image will have to communicate the cool act of rebellion against current issues to the consumer's consciousness.



skink

As a brand, SKINK will try to challenge many issues within the tattoo and piercing industries, such as hygiene, skin damage, poor design quality and artists' ownership and plagiarism.

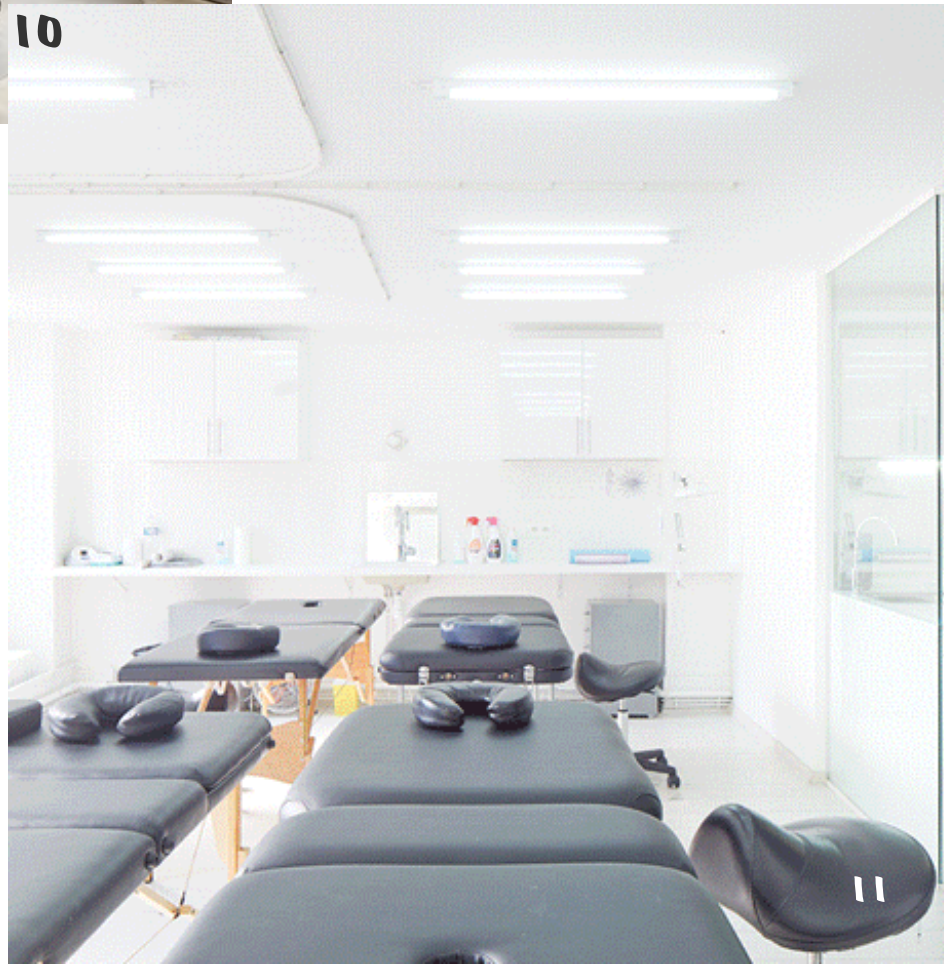


In order to battle the recurring stigma regarding low quality service, one of the brand's main goals will be to offer the safest possible environment for young adults to receive skin treatments.

By using established design methods and strategies, the ultimate physical and psychological comfort conditions will be provided, hence elevating the client and artist's experience

Working towards achieving brand loyalty, the brand will monitor post-treatment experience, take part in aftercare and actively reach out to users to keep connections..

By attending to the needs of both client and artist, a healthier relationship between both parties will be developed, shifting their focus onto the production of designs, ensuring high quality performance and satisfaction.



Apart from delivering the best experience in town and addressing current issues, SKINK will will also work towards educating the wider public in the history and beauty of this diverse culture.



CRITICAL DESIGN ANALYSIS

"The Looking Glass" (Facade renovation)

Architects: UNStudio

Location: Amsterdam,
Netherlands

Completion: 2019

Situated on the high-end shopping street Hooftstraat in the heart of the Museum Quarter in Amsterdam, the building needs to develop a relationship with the local environment.

Considering the people, culture and activities within the neighborhood, UNStudio's design has the task to integrate with the scene while still setting the stage for a distinctive flagship store.

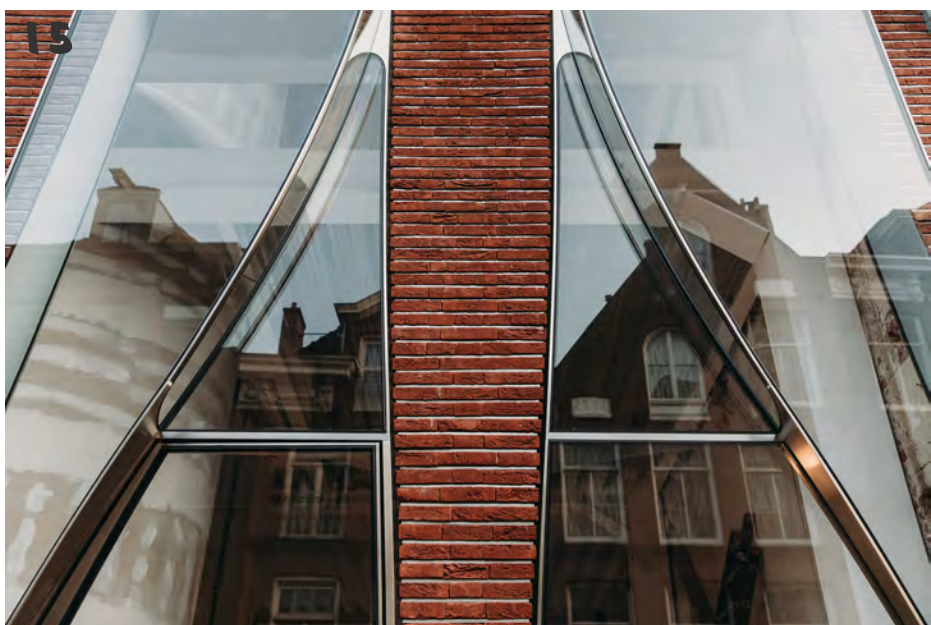
The renovation of the façade celebrates the craftsmanship of high-end tailored clothing, all the while keeping true to the traditional architecture of Amsterdam townhouses.



The traditional brickwork and three-windowed vertical division of the townhouse is elegantly interrupted by three curved glass boxes flowing down in a design that mimics billowing transparent cloth.

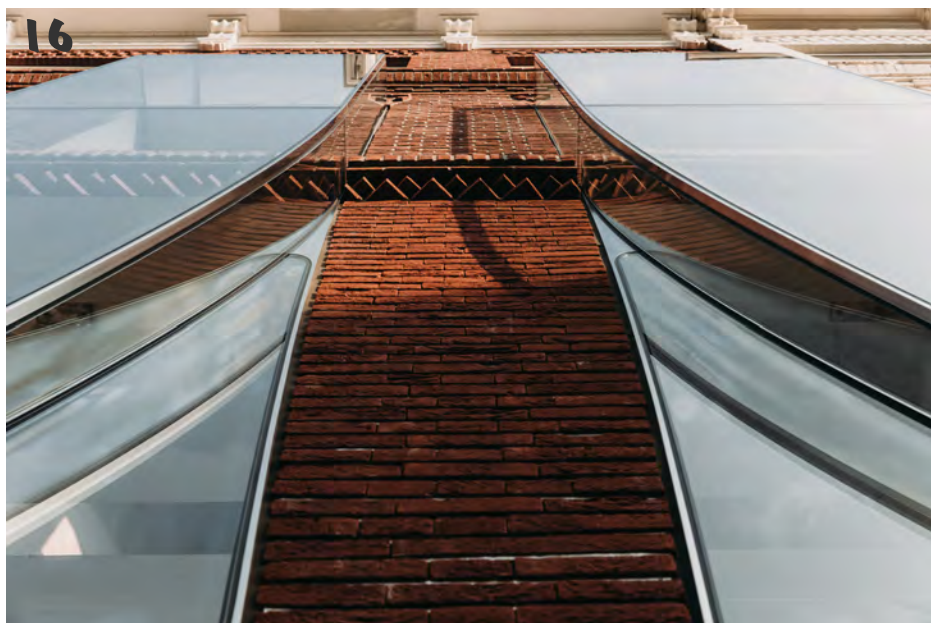


With this gesture the store is reimagining the display of garments and celebrates the elegance of textiles, both in form and function. The fluid shape of the glass panels allows for openings in a zipper-like motion on pedestrian eye-level that create visual interest through sightlines, while unveiling the latest designs.



The Looking Glass is a perfect example of how a site's heritage and traditions can be respected, even used to aid and navigate the design of the façade.

UNStudio has brilliantly managed to create a façade proposition that creates harmony between aesthetics and several functions – blends with the landscape of its surroundings, communicates the client's values, creates intriguing displays of the retail interior.



"The Optic Glass House"

(Location and use of environmental forces)

Architects: Hiroshi Nakamura & NAP

Location: Hiroshima, Japan

Completion: 2012



Taking into account the importance of site context in the previous design analysis, rarely do architects get projects with favorable locations.

In those cases, rather than blending with the landscape, it is the designers' goal to find solutions to its negative conditions and make the project stand-out from its environment.

In the bustling city of Hiroshima, near a very busy major intersection, Japanese practice Hiroshi Nakamura & NAP have developed a tranquil oasis of a house, with the goal to provide a look out onto the chaos of everyday life from the serene silence and privacy of one's own home. This interaction is achieved by introducing a transparent full height facade on the street side.

The façade is constructed with optical glass blocks, which effectively provide acoustics shutting out exterior sound pollution, while the natural lighting creates unpredictable optical illusions due to their high transparency.

The house features 3 levels, with an open roof garden spanning over the top 2 floors, which is concealed behind the façade. The garden is designed to benefit off several environmental forces.



The garden's trees make the most out of the east sunlight refracting through the glass, filtering it through their branches and letting through flickers of light onto the floor.



Cross-ventilation allows wind to pass through the whole length of the house, engaging the super lightweight sputter-coated metal curtain that borders the living room in a slow dance.

A water-basin skylight transforms rain strokes into water patterns onto the entrance floor beneath it.

This environment creates a natural haven of peace, while the serene soundless scenery of the exterior bustle elevates the experience and adds a sense of richness to the house.



The Optical Glass House is a great example of the importance environmental forces can have on design, more importantly how a city's infrastructure can inspire an entire concept, create design opportunities rather than limit them and even navigate a whole design philosophy.



"Casa Blanca"

(Importance of stairs and color contrast)

Architects: Martin Dulanto

Location: Lima, Peru

Completion: 2016

"As we move across a stairway, the form dictates our pacing, our feeling, our safety and our relationship and engagement with the space around us," said David Rockwell.

In projects, stairs are often viewed merely as a practical element to move from one elevation to another. It is widely recognized that their importance to a building is of the same scale as a spine to a human. However, many designers have successfully managed to make a staircase the main feature of their designs, viewing their potential in terms of aesthetics, psychology, and social functions, rather than just a way to get from point A to point B.



Architect Martin Dulanto has made a sculptural spiral staircase the most prominent feature of his residential project Casa Blanca in Lima.

The staircase is made from reinforced concrete, over an iron core that ensures it to be largely self-supporting. The smooth finish is achieved through a cement render, granting a very vibrant final finish with the use of fluorescent orange epoxy paint.



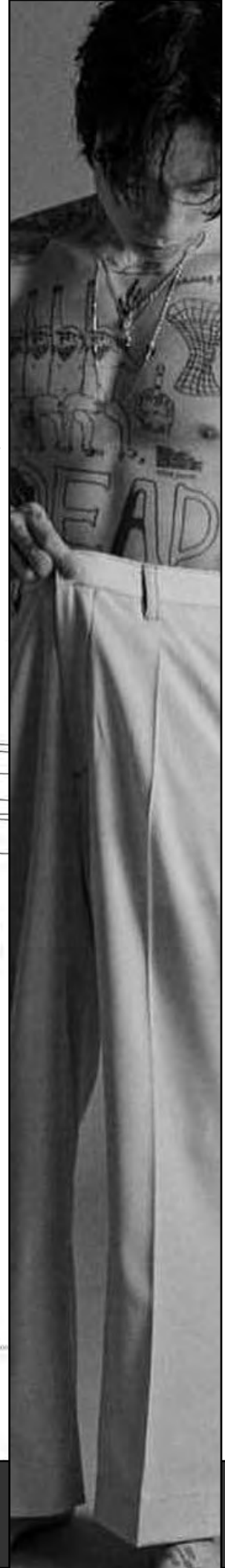
Using the simple principle of color contrast, introducing a single bright, playful component in an otherwise muted, mundane palette, the staircase acts as a very powerful personality element. It is the focal point and center of attention, while the rest of the design is purposefully dull in comparison, ensuring no other element can compete with the main exhibit.

This high-intensity color contrast approach is very specific to taste and personality, to many it might feel very obstructive and heavy on the eye. Nonetheless, this case study is a great example of how a single spatial manipulation element can dominate an entire space by a simple consideration of form and color.

SITE CONTEXT

Location and Site Analysis

The site is located in the city centre of Newcastle on 48-54 Saint Andrews Street. The local services and amenities include bars & restaurants, retail businesses and cultural attractions which all contribute to the large footfall. The immediate surrounding area is active and bustling, with lots of pedestrian and vehicular activity.





General Site Map

The site is within the Central Conservation Area, in close proximity to the Grade I Listed Saint Andrews Church and Grade II Listed former Co-operative store. Therefore, the design is obliged to give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Preserving the character or appearance of a conservation area can be achieved not only by making a positive contribution, but also by development which leaves the character or appearance of the area unharmed.



Site Map showcasing Grade Listed buildings

The site is highly sustainable in terms of transportation, being in close proximity to the Central station, with two metro stations, over 10 bus stops and a number of cycle routes links only a five minute walk away.



Site Map showcasing main routes

The site is located very close to the Gate, making its car park comfortable to use. With business buildings present in the surrounding area, 3 more car parks are available in close proximity, including multiple story ones.



Site Map showcasing car parks

The nearest business competitors are approximately 300 meters away, with PureInk Tattoo on Grainger street and Blue Lotus Piercing on Eldon Lane.

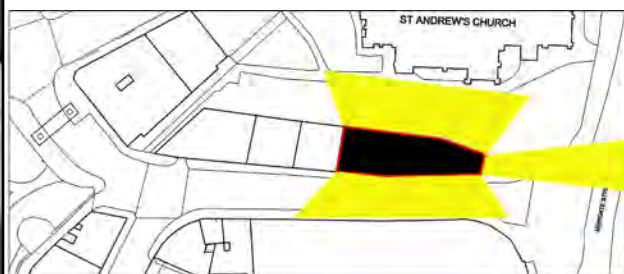


Site Map showcasing nearest competitors



Site Map showcasing sun path

The elongated shape and orientation of the buildings benefits from lots of natural lighting, with its right side facing sunrise and the front of the building favoring the mid day sun.



Site Map showcasing sightlines outward

The building offers outer sightlines spanning wide in 3 directions.

The businesses in the building include a 24h shop on the east end, former restaurant now vacant on the west and a retail in the middle. Businesses on the opposite side of the street include the Newcastle Arms pub and the Bar Block steakhouse.



Site Map showcasing surrounding greenery

The site is located in close proximity to St.James stadium, Leazes Park, Eldon Garden and other green landscapes.



Site Map showcasing local amenities

The location of the site is of active and communicative nature, with cultural attractions depicted in pink, bars and restaurants in purple and retails in orange.

Building Analysis



Photograph overlooking the exterior across all upper levels, showcasing existing apartments.



Photograph of the east end exterior of the building facing Newgate street.



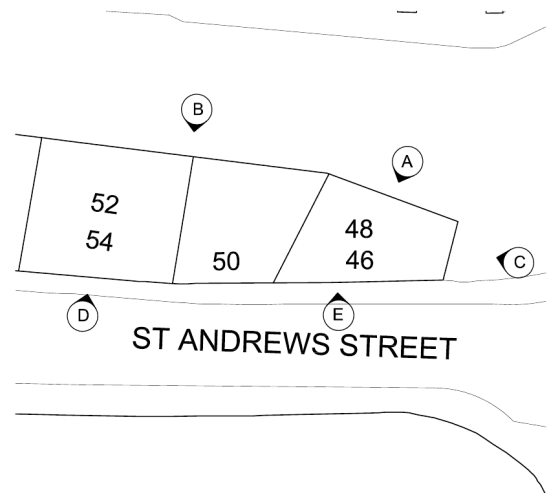
Main entrance photograph, showcasing its arched shape and neo-classical elements.



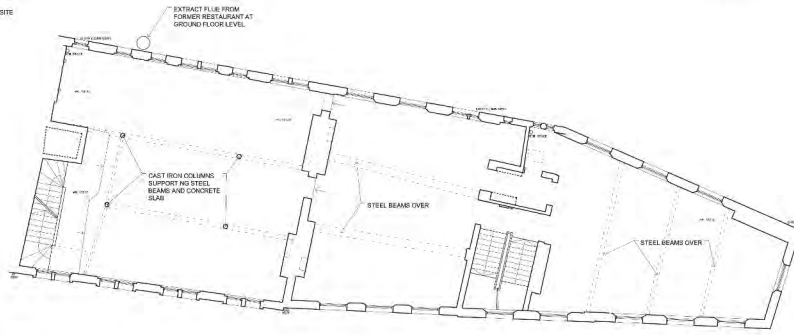
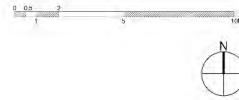
South elevation exterior, showcasing the red brickwork of the facade and current businesses.

The development involves the re-use of an under-occupied building. The building is a six-storey block comprising of retail/restaurants at ground floor with basement level. The existing use of floors 1 to 4 are as Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) (C4 use), however the floors have been vacant since approximately October 2015.

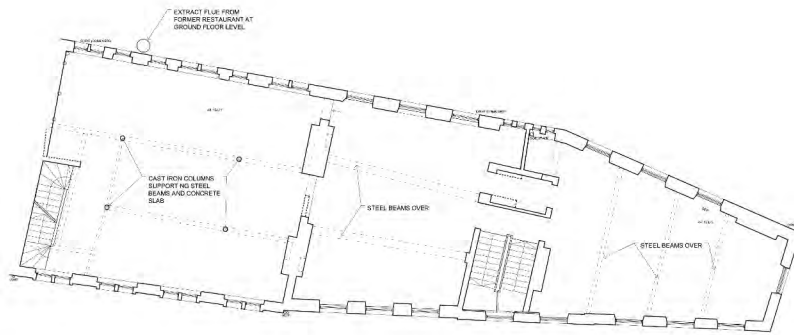
This project proposes the use of the basement, ground, first and second floor of the building, while leaving out the third and fourth floors for residential use.



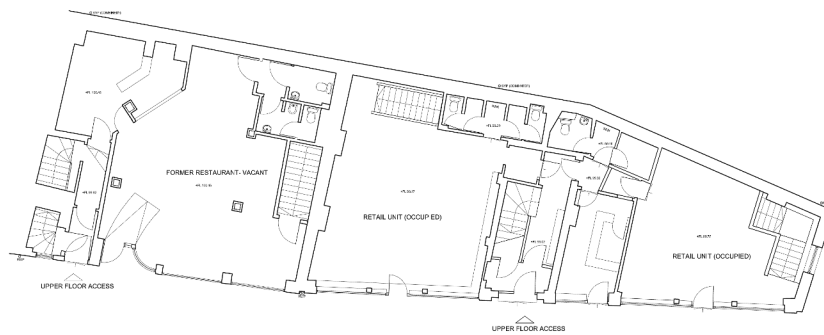
PLANS BASED ON AIR GEOMATICS SURVEY
 INFORMATION PROVIDED BY CLIENT
 - UPDATES TO EXISTING PLAN COMPLETED BY
 RGA, COLEMAN'S STREET OUT WINGS AND A
 SUBSEQUENT DIMENSIONS CHECK ON SITE.
 NOTE: ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE
 PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION



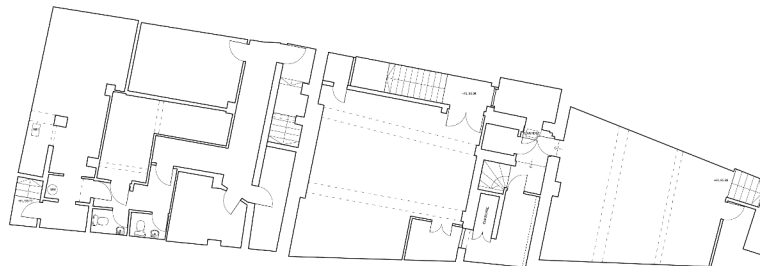
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

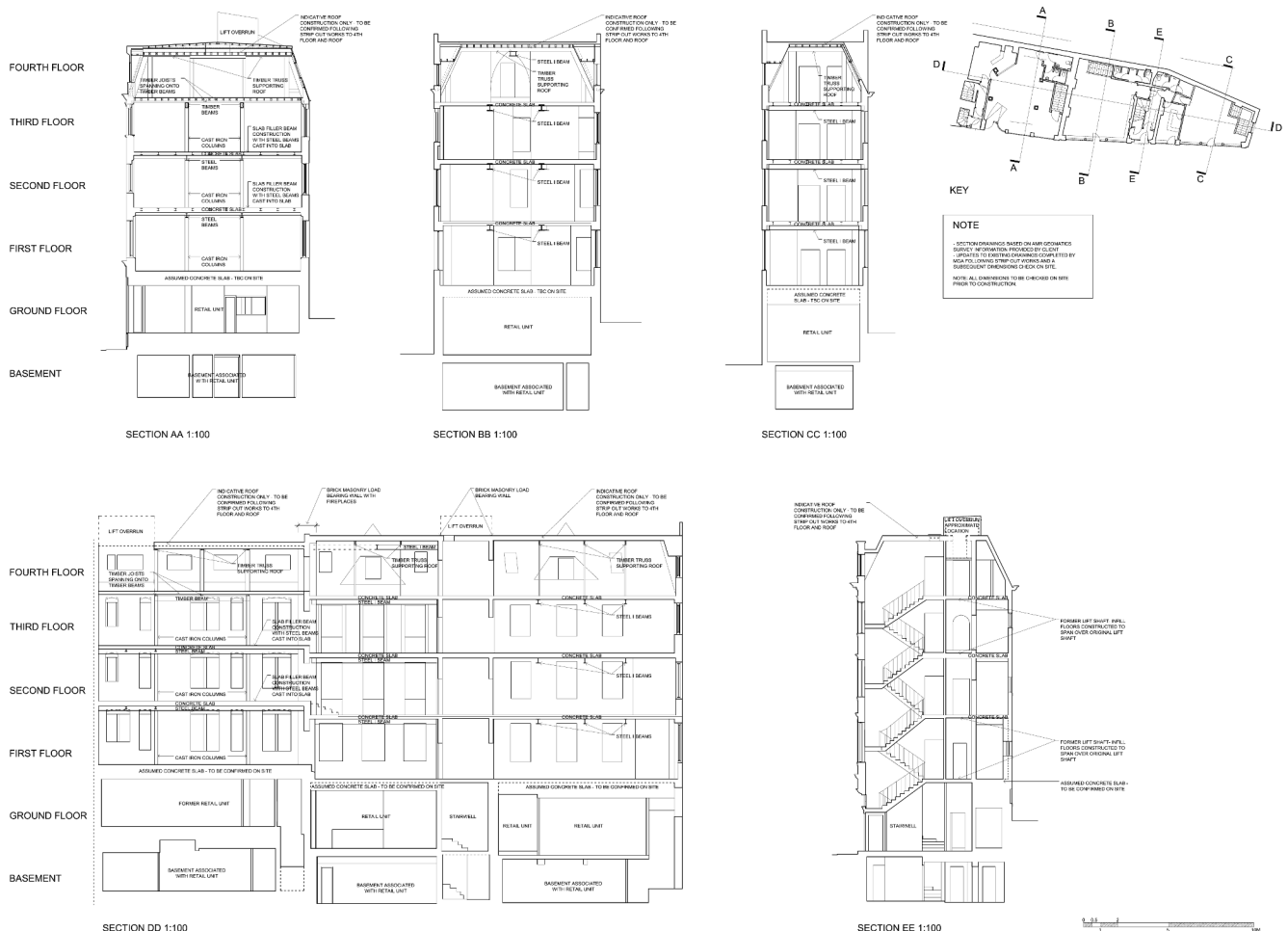


GROUND FLOOR PLAN



BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

The building currently includes two staircases throughout all floors, with three additional staircases providing access to the basement floor for each of the separate businesses taking place on the ground floor. Private access to the top two floors can easily be provided by the west staircase or by introducing a lift which will provide accessibility throughout the whole building. Structural support is provided by the load-bearing walls, 4 cast iron columns which support the steel beams in the ceiling and the concrete slab.





CONCLUSION

The Proposition has given insight into the problematic scene of the tattoo and piercing industry and outlined the importance of an environment within Newcastle and the UK, which can address issues and work towards finding solutions.

SKINK as a brand will strive to deliver such a space, professionally designed to inspire comfort and trust in customers. A suitable building with a central location will be the place where communities, cultures and talents are united in their goal to remind the wider public of the beauty in all art.

FEASIBILITY REPORT

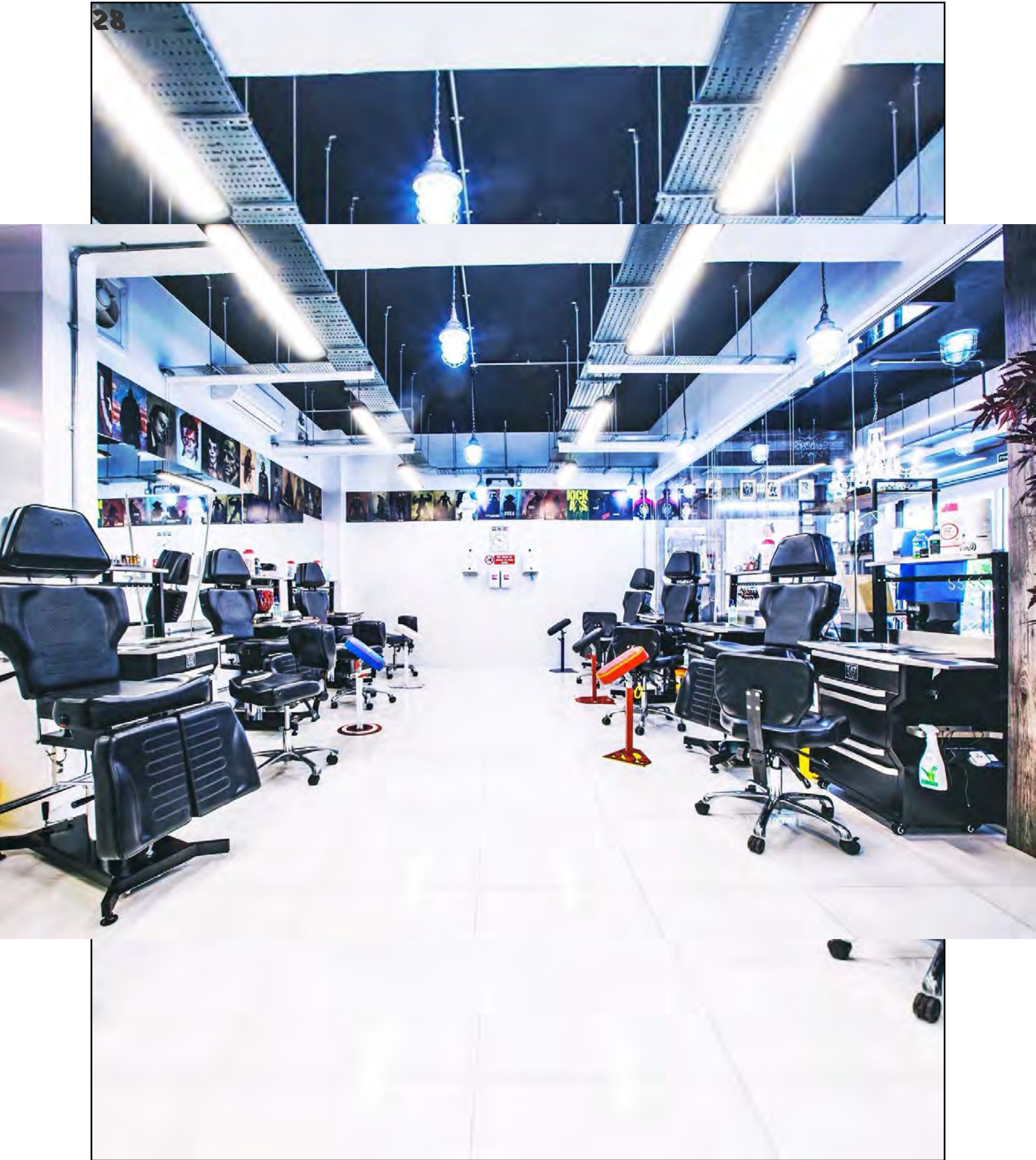
INTRODUCTION

The tattoo and piercing industry have come a long way towards societal acceptance over the past decades, however many issues stand to be addressed.

Individuals expressing interest in receiving such treatments are often facing criticism, as involvement with this culture is still regarded by many as a poor, dangerous and impulsive life choice. Artists are also often accused of criminal association, incompetence and lack of skin safety measures.

On the other hand, the industry doesn't offer much support for up and coming talents to develop their own artistic styles and help the natural evolution of the artistry.

SKINK will battle those issues, through using established designed principles in its studio to develop the safest most comfortable environment in Newcastle to receive treatments. The brand will provide opportunities for educational exhibitions of the diverse culture, will nourish local talents and host convention to revive the wider public's respect of the beauty in tattoo and piercing artistry.



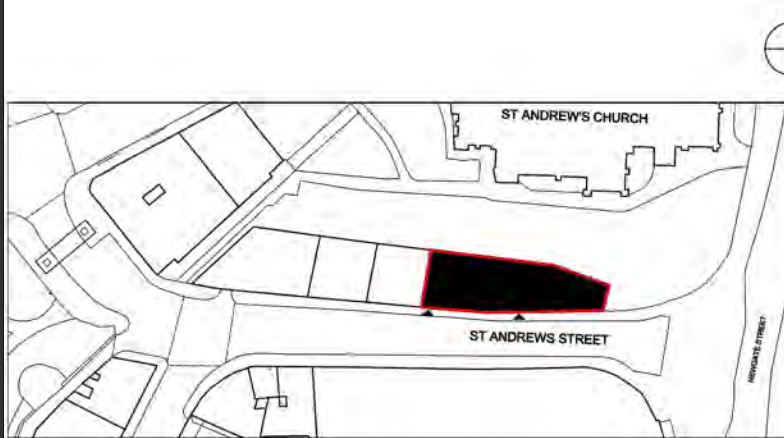
THE SITE





The site is located in the city centre of Newcastle on 48-54 Saint Andrews Street. The district is a retail and leisure hub with lots of businesses attracting crowds. Attractions include Chinatown, The Gate, St.James`Park stadium, Leazes Park and many more.

The site`s central location will help SKINK to promote green transport. With multiple cycle routes and pedestrian streets leading up to the building, zero emissions travel will be very possible.



Public transport, including several metro stations and bus stops, is available nearby as well as a few car parks.



THE BRIEF

The tattoo and piercing industry honors a history of many cultural influences, social diversity and a range of artistic styles.

According to psychology researchers Kristin Broussard and Helen Harton, despite the recent increase in tattoo culture popularity, pejorative perceptions of tattooed individuals such as negative personality characteristics, lower levels of inhibition, competence, sociability, and higher levels of promiscuity are still very much present.

Unfair prejudices towards workers in the industry, such as associations with gang and criminal behavior, skin safety and lack of hygiene limit the industry's evolution. Those stigmas are relatively justified due to actual social issues within the industry which aid the spread of bad reputation towards it.





Many studios have emerged that rely on profiting from “drunk” tattoos, taking advantage of people’s vulnerable states to acquire customers, while in the past lots of artists weren’t opposed to carrying out offensive imagery of hate speech, racist and offensive symbols or any other kind of inappropriate contents. Lots of new and upcoming artists struggle to find the right environment for artistic growth and often find themselves involved in such studios.

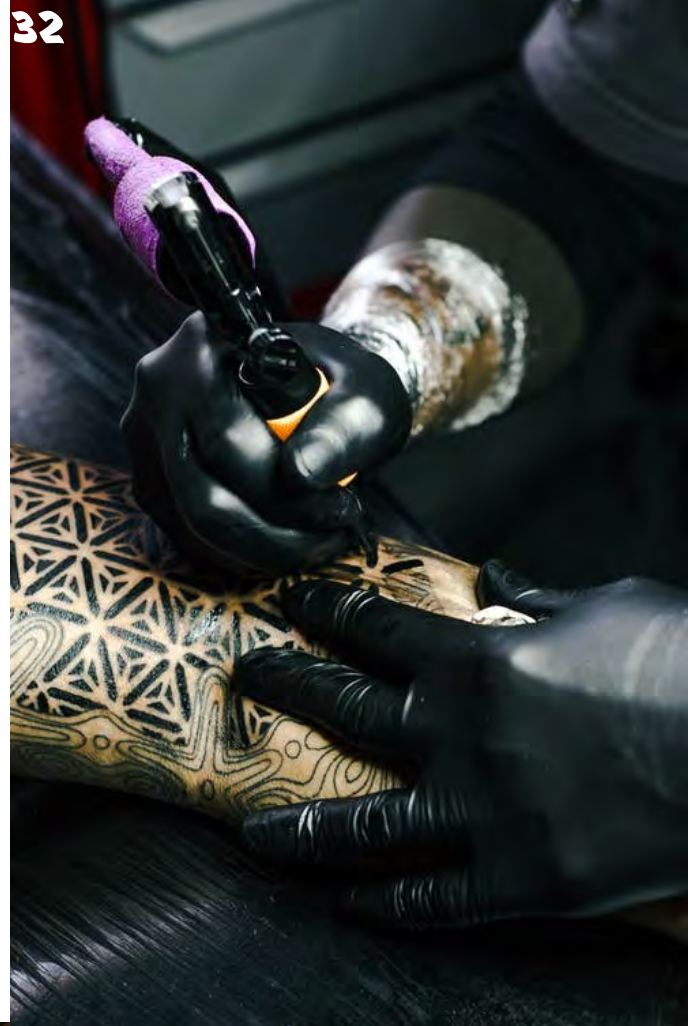
As a result, many artists’ phenomenal work doesn’t receive the deserved recognition and respect from the public. More and more artists aim to acquire a good reputation through clients with serious artistic demands. Surgery and burn scarring cover-ups are a great example of how a tattoo can make a real difference in survivors’ self esteem and pride.



Other types of issues in the industry also include artists’ design ownership, plagiarism, trend conformity, lack of support towards younger talents and artistry development. Many artists have had to adjust their personal style and often even disregard it completely in order to conform to trends and keep their businesses relevant.

SKINK aims to address this list of issues, find solutions and inspire appreciation towards the beauty of artistic expression and culture that the tattoo and piercing industry brings.

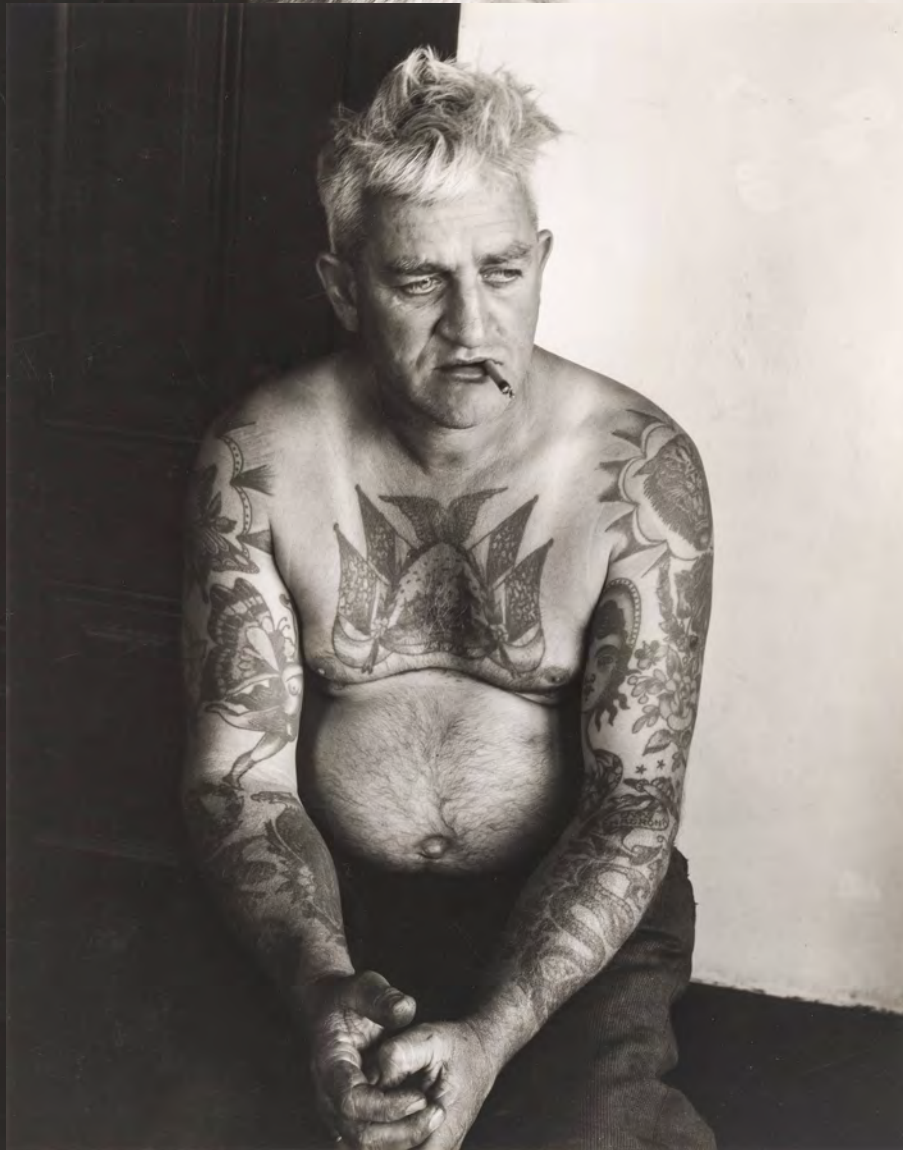
The studio will offer a number of tailored services, a retail element in partnership with brands, an educational exhibit area showcasing the diverse influences on culture, workshops for younger talents to learn from experienced artists as well as opportunities for hosting larger national/international events.



The Brand, Graphics and Retail

SKINK's brand identity will be one that stands for change, opportunity and freedom of expression. The brand image will have to communicate the cool act of rebellion against current issues to the consumer's consciousness.

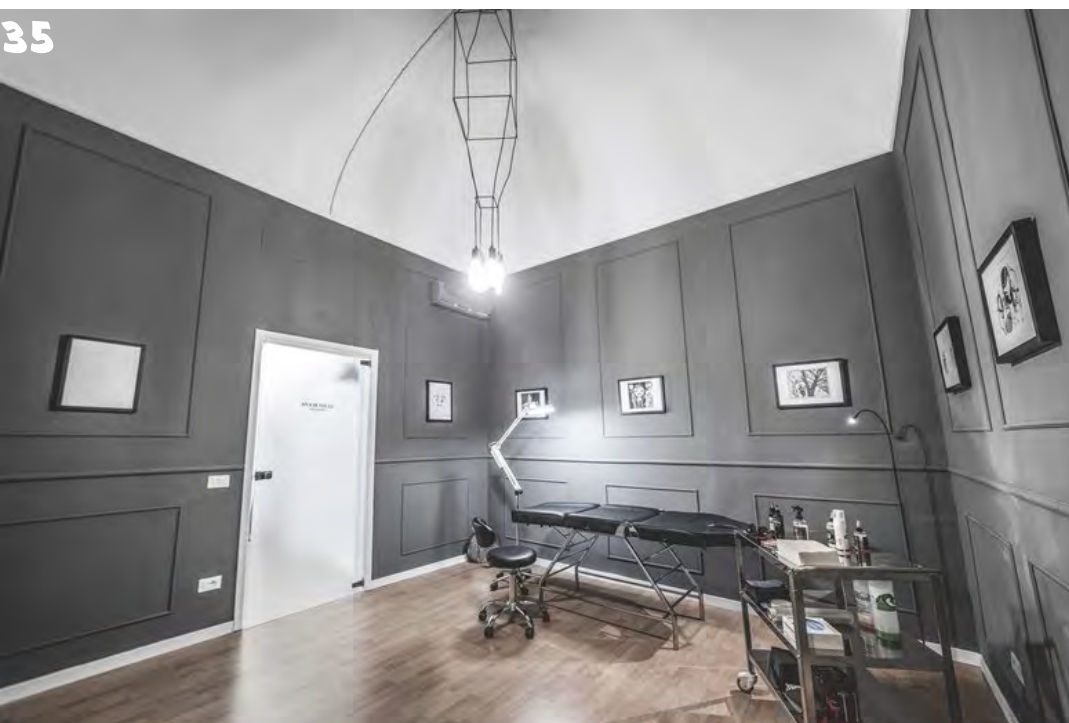
34



INKJECTION

Tattoo & Piercing

35



On the other hand, the service and space design will have to depict the controlled safety of the environment in order to inspire comfort and trust in the customer.

To achieve brand awareness and loyalty, the brand will have to maintain a strong presence in customers' consciousness.

36



Strong, cool graphics and signage in the design of the space will have to make a powerful impression upon visiting the studio. The online presence will prove essential to keeping touch with current customers, attracting new ones and making the brand feel current.

Those values will translate into the retail element, with branded merchandise available in store and online. Partnerships with exterior brands associated with tattoo culture and supplies will be a priority, as well as partnerships with vintage clothing sale supporting profit donations.

The Reception and Exhibition Area



SKINK recognizes customers might be interested in the tattoo and piercing culture without necessarily committing to treatments. Having this in mind, the ground floor of the building will function as a permanent exhibition area, educating visitors in the detailed history of tattoo practice, influences on cultures and diversity of artistic styles. Besides this, the ground floor will also host the reception area, where customers can make appointments with the artists, view their portfolios or simply get information on upcoming workshops and events.

Consultation and Tattoo Treatment Areas

SKINK`s goal is to deliver an exclusive one on one experience, a comfortable, friendly and productive relationship between the artist and client.



The first floor will be the level with the most customer focused environments, therefore will accommodate only front of house facilities. An open plan waiting area will have to be provided in close proximity to the stairs and lift, but secluded from the rest of the more private customer areas.

Privacy is often essential in cosmetic treatments, especially in the case of tattoo design consultations and executions. By providing ambient designed consultation rooms on the first floor, the design will ensure the production of high-quality designs that satisfy customers.

39



Privacy is even more essential when it comes to the tattoo and piercing process itself, with a range of body parts available for treatments. Effective internal partitions ought to be provided in order to serve several customers at a time.

Each treatment area needs to possess its own arsenal of supplies and comfortable chairs for both the artist and customer. Sessions can take from 2 to over 10 hours of work, therefore comfort is key. The surrounding environment needs to be engaging enough to entertain the mind of the customer for extensive periods of time.

40



A laser removal room with a specialist will also be available on the first floor by appointment. Public restrooms also have to be included on the first floor at clients` disposal.

Workshops and Events Areas

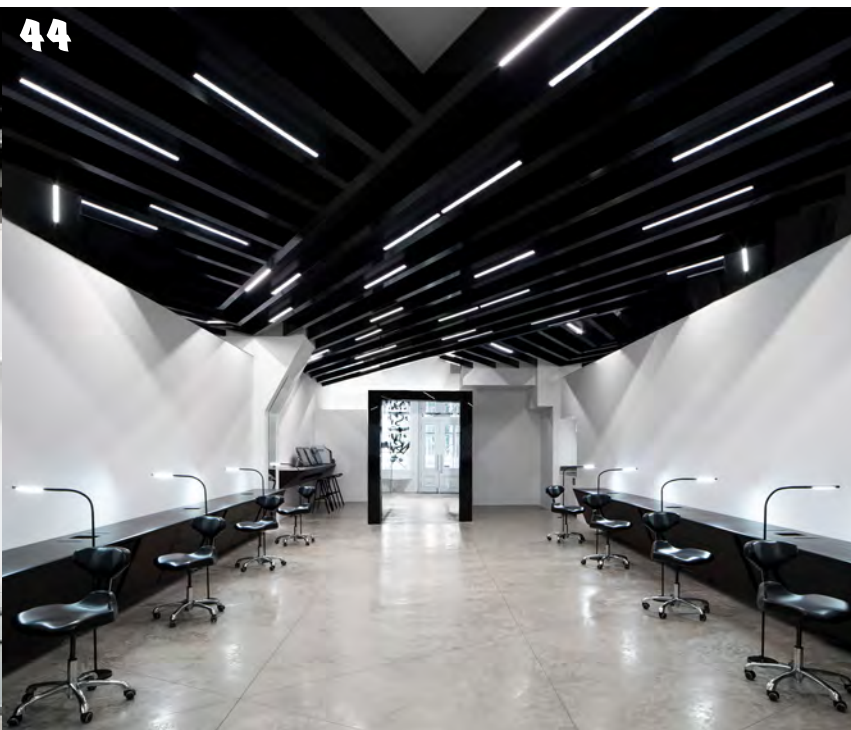
The second floor will accommodate a little more than staff areas. Most of the square footage will be occupied by a highly adaptable open plan area. This area will be at the studio's disposal for larger gathering and events. Those include workshops, classes or seminars on different topics that artists will host occasionally. Those will be open to the public by bookings, with most of them focused on passing generations of experience to local talents.

The area will also be suitable for even larger events that SKINK will organize in collaboration with exterior brands and partners, such as clothing sales, art exhibitions and hopefully tattoo conventions.



42





Circulation and accessibility



This project will be occupying four out of the six levels of the building on site – the basement, ground, first and second floors. Three separate businesses occupy the ground floor, each provided with a staircase leading to their private basement area.

SKINK will only be using the central unit on the ground and basement levels, but the whole footprint of the building on the upper two levels. The building is equipped with two staircases connecting all floors – a main staircase adjacent to the central unit on the ground floor and an additional one on the west end. Both are currently accessed through their own entrance doors.

This project will be using the main staircase for access to the upper two floors, while the secondary staircase will provide an escape route and a more private access to the top floors for tenants.

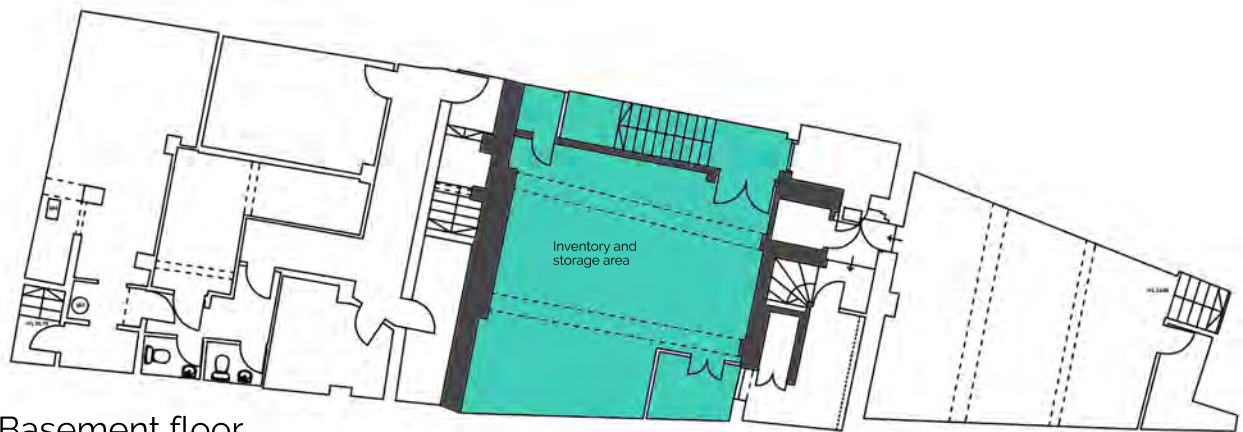
The rather open plan nature of the layout across all floors will be preserved for clear circulation paths, while signage will further help with navigation.

The refurbishment will take the responsibility of fitting a lift across all levels to provide accessibility throughout the building, which will be made available to staff, customers and tenants occupying the top floors.

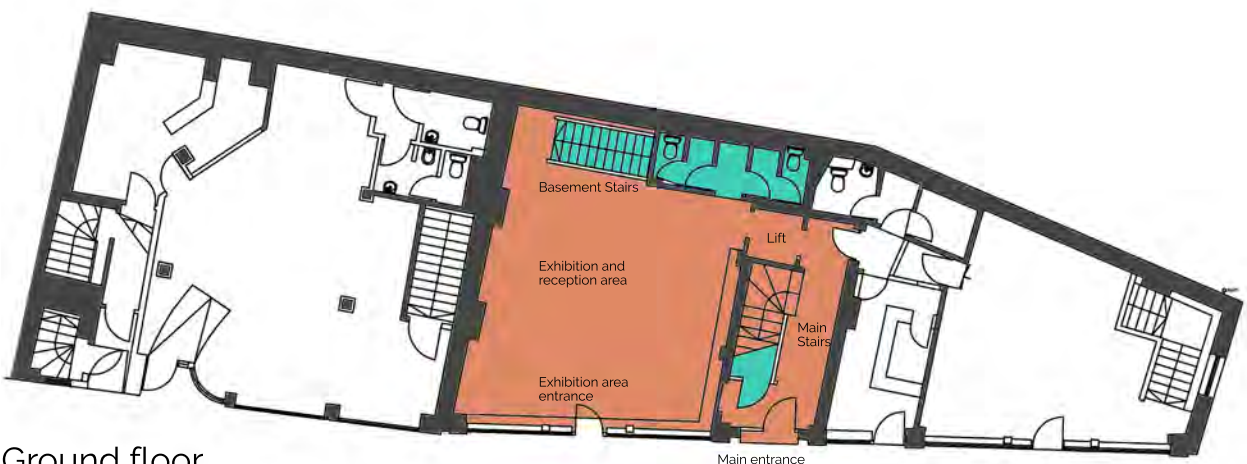
BLOCK PLANNING

- **Back of House**
- **Front of House**
- **Middle of House**

The basement floor will function as an inventory and storage space, equipped with back of house facilities only. The ground floor will function as a reception and exhibition area, covered predominantly by front of house facilities with the exception of utility rooms at the back. The first floor will function as the main customer area, hosting retail, consultation, treatment and breakout space. This floor will be predominantly covered by front of house and middle of house facilities. The second floor will function partly as a staff restricted area, as well as an open plan events space. It will mostly be covered by middles of house and front of house facilities.



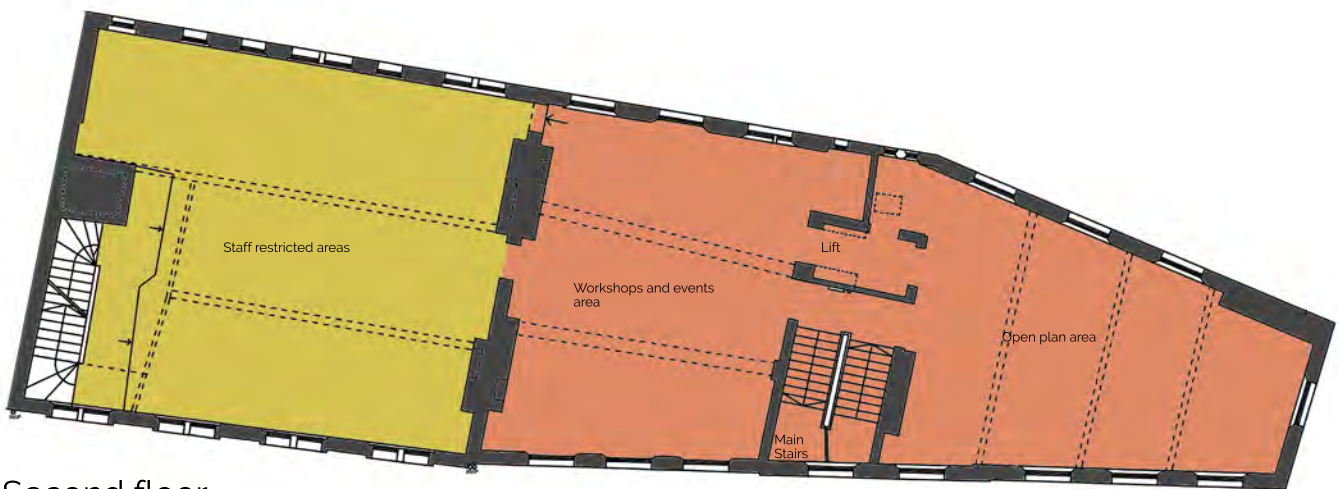
Basement floor



Ground floor



First floor



Second floor

SURVEYS

Building survey

This survey provides a thorough evaluation and inspection of the building's structure. It will outline the overall condition and outline any discrepancies that may pose risks or add costs to the project.

Services survey

This survey will map out the existing systems within the building, that support water, drainage, gas, electricity, heating, ventilation. It will conclude their performance and ensure they conform with regulations. If they require repair or

Dimensional survey

This survey will conduct measurements to verify the exact dimensions and property value.

Fire containment survey

This survey will examine the current fire escape routes and strategies the building offers. It will also recommend improvements in order to reach higher levels of fire safety.

Asbestos survey

Asbestos is a material historically used to construct buildings. It is a very harmful material, which can cause many health issues. This survey will recognize asbestos within the structure, which can then be disposed of.

AUTHORITIES

Building Regulations

Adhering to regulations is crucial to the whole process of project realisation. Building works and forms will have to be submitted to Local Authorities for evaluation. Approval is required prior to the commencement of construction on site.

Planning Applications

Due to the building's proximity to two Grade listed buildings, a Planning application has to be submitted and approved by the Local Authority before on site works are initiated.

Advertising Consent

Permission is required in order to display advertisement content on the exterior, such as illuminated signage, boards, flags or any sort of branded content.

Listed Building Consent

This application outlines any demolition or alteration to listed properties and their settings. It is submitted to the Local Authority, and its approval ensures the preservation of features that share historic value.

CONSULTANTS

Architect

The architect provides essential insight into the structural matters of the design process. Their expertise will whether elements have to be retained or can be altered, They will liaise with other consultants in making those decisions.

Interior designer

The interior designer is responsible for translating the brief's requirements into a functional three dimensional environment. A cohesive layout, engaging visuals and comfort are prioritized by the brand. Due to the project's very specific nature, the designer will have to dive into thorough research of the culture and influences behind the tattoo industry.

Structural engineer

Alongside the architect, the structural engineer ensures the structural integrity of the building is not affected by any modifications.

Building services consultant

The building services engineer is responsible for the design, installation and maintenance of the utilities, monitoring the effectiveness of their performance.

Mechanical and Ventilation consultant

Evaluates mechanical and ventilation systems and improves energy efficiency and air quality.

Electrical consultant

Is in charge of design, development, installation and maintenance of circuits and electrical systems, responsible for lighting, heating, ventilation, etc.

Fire consultant

Is responsible for reducing the chances of fire outbursts and ensuring the safety of staff and customers in the event of such disasters. He gives expertise on evacuation routes, emergency plans, exit locations and strategies.

Quantity surveyor

Takes responsibility of the contractual and financial aspects for the project. He will propose practical solutions to help stay on budget and will monitor the costings progress throughout the project.

Lighting design specialist

He will ensure the staff's workstations are comfortable for use and will propose general and accent lighting that will be appropriate for the nature of the business.

Tattoo artist specialist

An experienced artist from the industry will provide invaluable insight towards how conditions can be improved to ensure a successful creative process for the staff.

Graphic Design Specialist

Will provide a branding strategy for the brand's presence and will take responsibility for the branded graphics and signage in the space.

TIMESCALE OF STAGES

	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Briefing and Initial Meeting							
Feasibility Report							
Scheme Design							
Client Approval							
Detail Design Drawings							
Statutory Approval							
Workings Drawings							
Consultant Drawings							
Specifications							
Quantities Bill							
Tendering Period							
Tenders Receipt							

This project will be developed over the course of 6 months, beginning December. The timescale table above outlines the various stages that will occur during the project. The timescale proposes a case in which works will be ready to commence in June.

TIMESCALE OF WORKS

	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Sept.	Oct	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Ap.
Pre-contract Lead in												
Works on Site												
Meetings												
Liability Period												

The table above outlines the timescale of works, expected to take 10 months from start to completion. Meetings with the client are held every week during the start and towards the end of completion. During the middle stages, meetings are held bi-weekly to still keep the client informed as the construction progress. The 6 month long liability period will be agreed.

The entire timescale of the project from the initial stages to its realisation is estimated to be 16 months, scheduled to open in May and attract customers under the sunny rays of summertime.

COST ESTIMATES

Space	Area	Cost/m2	Cost estimate
Front of House	352 sqm		1,138,500
Ground floor	52 sqm	3,000	156,000
First floor	165 sqm	3,500	577,500
Second floor	135 sqm	3,000	405,000
Back of House	56 sqm		21,000
Basement floor	45 sqm	1,000	4,500
Ground floor	11 sqm	1,500	16,500
Middle of House	125 sqm		250,000
First floor	47 sqm	2,000	94,000
Second floor	78 sqm	2,000	156,000
			1,409,500

The cost estimate is produced to conclude whether the project is feasible and in order to secure funding. It has been calculated based on the initial block planning, which separated the space into seven zones. Each zone is assigned a specific function and cost per square meters. The table above is put together prior to the construction stages.

The total cost of the project is expected to be approximately **1,410,000** pounds. The first floor is expected to cost the most due the fact most customer based activities will be taking place in the area. The comfort of both staff and customer is a main priority with this project, therefore a higher standard than the usual for business of this nature will be applied,.

FEES

Consultants	% of Total	Total fee
Architect	8 %	112,840
Interior designer	8 %	112,840
Building services consultant	2 %	28,210
Structural engineer	0.5 %	7,052
Electrical engineer	0.5 %	7,052
Fire consultant	0.5 %	7,052
Mechanical and ventilation consultant	0.5 %	7,052
Quantity surveyor	3 %	42,315
Graphic Design Specialist	2 %	28,210
Lighting Design specialist	2 %	28,210
Tattoo artist specialist	2 %	28,210
	Total Fees	409,043
	Total Cost Estimate	1,409,500
	Total Project Cost	1,818,543

The estimated cost for the consultants and specialists' services is **409,043**, resulting in an overall total cost estimate of **1,818,543** pounds.

PROCUREMENT

The procurement is a process of financing the project. and sourcing the design and construction services.

Contracts are often signed with suppliers to provide services and goods before the project can commence.



Design and Build

A single contractor/team is appointed to take responsibility of the project from start to completion. Responsibilities include design, planning, organization and construction.

Competitive tendering

Multiple prospective contract would respond to the same invitations to tender. Each would make a competitive offer for their supply services. The offers can be assessed on value, quality, speed, cost and one would get chosen in the end.

Negotiated tendering

This type of procurement is a case of approaching a specific contractor. The tendering terms are agreed by both parties.

This project will opt for competitive tendering, by producing a tender document pack and sending it to prospective contractors.

TENDERING PACKAGE

Included are:

Proposition

Feasibility report

Research Paper

**Contractual Drawing
Pack**

Model

Material Board

Visualisations

Presentation Boards



HANDOVER AND COMPLETION

Practical Completion

The practical completion stage will come once construction is nearly completed, except for minor detail that would not interfere with the operation of the property. The day the practical completion is confirmed marks the start of the liability period.

Handover

The handover procedure is essentially the transfer of control from the contractors to the client. In order to achieve a smooth transfer, this is usually pre planned to prevent hanging bills. All site work has to be fully completed and checked with regulations, so public access can be initiated and the business operation can commence.

Liability Period

On the day of the handover, the liability period begins. During the agreed amount of time, the client can report defects to the contractor and hold him accountable. The contract administrator assesses those against the contract to conclude whether it's a case of maintenance. This period typically lasts from 6 month to a year.



49



50







SUMMARY

SKINK will be a rare gem in an ocean of carbon copy tattoo studios. One of a very few environments in the UK, which strives for consistency and excellence. With the support of its own brand, the space will shout loud and clear its message - **change**. Change in the stigmas, change in the practice,, change in perceptions, change towards improvement.

By implementing educational elements and lots of collaborative activities, the existence of this project will bring the community together and inspire creativity and curiosity.

A carefully designed brand identity and image, business model and customer engagement strategy makes this project a sensible investment.

Furthermore this is an investment in culture, community and art.

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RESEARCH PAPER



HOW CAN TATTOO & PIERCING BUSINESSES
PROVIDE A SAFE AND COMFORTABLE
EXPERIENCE FOR ITS USERS?



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Preface

Background

Aims & Methodology

SECONDARY RESEARCH

1. Tattoo and Piercing Related Health Risks

Tattoo Practice Risks

Prevention

Piercing Practice Risks

Prevention

2. Successful Standards And Practices to Minimize Health Risks

3. Discomfort Cause Study: Pain

Tattoo Pain Chart

Piercing Pain Chart

PRIMARY RESEARCH

How To Deliver A Great Tattoo Experience For All Users?

Results And Analysis

CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY, REFERENCES, APPENDIX

59

60

61

62

63

68

69

72

73

75

76

77

78

79-85

88

89-95

PREFACE

In the context of the recent development of the tattoo and piercing industry, this paper will examine potential negative influences on customer experience and satisfaction. Once an understanding has been formed of the influences with the most justified negative impact, the research will move on to compile an analysis of how such influences can be minimized. The analysis will also aid the research in identifying potential positive influences.

By clearly outlining negative and positive influences to user experience, tattoo businesses can be improved to deliver the best experience to its clients.



BACKGROUND

The past two decades have seen a spike of interest in the tattoo and piercing industry among adults. The estimated percentage of adults with one or more tattoos increased from 14 % to 21% between 2008 and 2012, while more recent studies have reported that a quarter of those aged under 30 have adorned their skin with at least one tattoo. This recent boom in demand has led to a relentless growth rate of businesses. While the levels of potential competition rise night and day, so do the standards of many tattoo businesses.

Various methods are applied to ensure customer satisfaction, many of which prioritize end product over customer experience. This customer base is generally satisfied with the end result of skin treatments, however overall experience satisfaction is rarely achieved.

The process of receiving a tattoo is a very personal and intimate experience and has to be considered holistically in order to leave a customer highly satisfied. In such an intimate experience, customers' psychological and physical comfort should be considered indispensable. Additionally, in a business relying on artistic productivity and consistency, artists' satisfaction is also crucial to the success of the business. Therefore employee experience and comfort would ideally be considered as a priority as well.



AIMS

This research paper will aim to explore ways in which the overall tattoo and piercing experience can be improved for users, both customers and employees. Academically approved research of the health risks posed by such treatments will give insight as to how businesses can provide a safe environment. Additional research regarding the mental state of users who engage in the tattoo and piercing process will give further insight into how businesses can provide a comfortable setting. By compiling and analyzing the findings, this paper will justify the need of attention placed towards the experience aspect of businesses to achieve greater success. Additionally, the findings will also outline some of the key features needed within a successful facility to ultimately bring down barriers and stigma regarding the industry.

METHODOLOGY

This paper will use secondary research to explore negative influences on the overall experience of the tattoo process and identify areas for improvement within traditional tattoo and piercing businesses. Primary research will then attempt to justify whether reconsideration of those areas will prove useful.

A final conclusion of the findings will clearly outline what points of attention are required to elevate the experience of users.

The methodology of the research paper will combine secondary research findings with primary research analysis. Secondary research will be conducted into the awareness, prevention, occurrence, diagnosis, report and treatment of tattoo and piercing related health risks. Academically approved documents will point out the most prominent risks, their cause and what measures have to be taken to prevent them. Research will also be conducted into the causes and reduction of pain levels regarding tattoo and piercing services.

The primary research will then gather qualitative data to build upon the findings in order to investigate their relevance. This will be achieved through private interviews with tattoo artists in the industry. The interview will consist of open ended questions in hope of gaining professionals' clear opinions on the topic of experience improvement.

The academic findings combined with the comments of professionals will highlight key measures, tactics and features to be put into design consideration of modern tattoo interiors.

SECONDARY RESEARCH

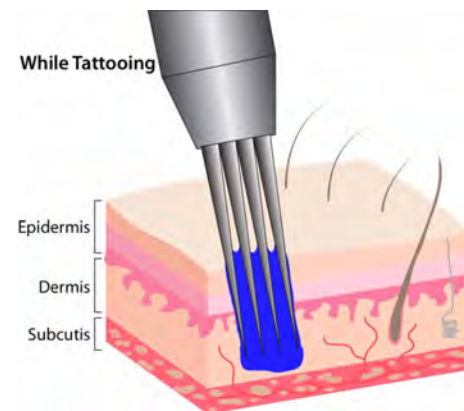
I. TATTOO AND PIERCING RELATED HEALTH RISKS

Understanding the process behind tattoo and piercing procedures.

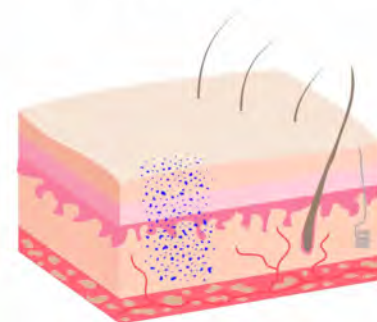
Both tattoo and piercing practices fall under the category of body modification procedures. Those are procedures carried out with the goal of altering a body's appearance or form. Government guidelines describe tattooing as 'a procedure that involves the puncture of the skin so that a dye may be inserted into the dermal layer to achieve a permanent design', and piercing as 'the perforation of the skin and underlying tissue, in order to create a tunnel in the skin through which jewellery is inserted' (HELA, 2001).

All known methods of applying tattoos to the skin are carried out through insertion of pigment into the dermis. Modern methods use a machine which navigates a cluster of needles to puncture and deposit ink into the top layer of the dermis. This process is conducted in an oscillatory motion whereby skin can be punctured up to 3000 times per minute. In the following week post-application, the skin reacts by producing exudate around each puncture point, protectively encapsulating the ink clumps in dense fibrous tissue while lymph nodes collect what migrates out. This reaction causes the flaky crust on the tattoo, which is a visual cue for the start of the healing process.

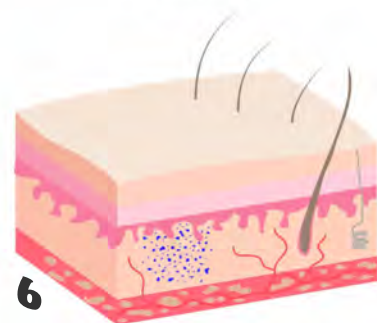
Two methods are known for performing piercings. The first method involves forceps to hold an area taut while a needle punctures a gateway for the jewellery. Whereas the second introduces the use of a spring-loaded piercing gun to create the gateway for the jewellery.



Before Healing



After Healing



What health risks are facing those who engage in the tattoo practice?

The demand in the service has increased due to its indisputable benefits to mental health, self-expression, individuality and artistic value. Nonetheless, the overall experience comes with as much disadvantages. Various health risks are posed by the process of tattooing and complications can occur at both the application and healing stages of the process. These include bacterial and viral infections, localized diseases and miscellaneous reactions.

Infectious Complications

Tattoo needle penetration of the skin barrier may introduce a range of microorganisms into the dermis. Microorganisms may also find their way into the body during the healing phase of a tattoo. Bacterial infections may include *Staphylococcus*, *Streptococcus*, *Pseudomonas*, and *Clostridium* species and even tetanus but also infections with atypical bacteria, such as commensal mycobacteria, tuberculosis and leprosy. Fungal, parasitic, and spirochaetal (syphilis) infections can occur. Viral infections include hepatitis B and C, (HIV), herpes and viruses causing local infection (e.g. warts, molluscum, and condylomata). Bacteria may also pass into the bloodstream and cause sepsis or even infect the heart valves, and result in cardiac insufficiency.

Subjects to tattooing are most vulnerable to a skin infection within the first two weeks. Symptoms include redness, itchiness, discharge, swelling and fever. Persons having weaknesses and impaired immune systems can be especially vulnerable.

Infective microorganisms' origins may be found in the tattooed person, the tattoo parlor, the artist, the needle or other instruments used, or even in the tattoo ink product or possibly contaminated water used for ink dilution.



Non-Infectious Complications and Adverse Events

Reactions and complications can be differentiated into allergies and local reaction patterns.

Allergies

There is a latency period of primary sensitisation that can last weeks, months, or years since the tattoo was obtained until the reaction appears. Once a full-blown reaction occurs, it is constant, chronic, cumbersome and refractory to topical corticoid therapy. A definite criterion for allergy is allergic cross-reactivity, i.e. an appearance of alike reactions of the same color in another anatomical region.

Papular Pattern

Tattoos may show papular thickening and elevation in certain areas. Elevations may be round and elongated, and often appear where the density of pigment is too high as a result of 'ink overload' during injection. Elevations are often chronic but may resolve over several months.

Papular reactions are often caused by needle trauma or instillation of more ink than the dermis can withhold. Papules should not be eroded by scratching or they will leave a guttate white spot. This pattern is very common and especially noted in black tattoos and black linings.



Plaque-Like Pattern

These reactions show flat thickening and elevation of the entire area where a problematic pigment was inserted. If the tattoo is a line, such as in lettering tattoo styles, the entire line will be affected. Plaque-like patterns are primarily seen in red tattoos or in nuances of red. Green and blue tattoos may also show this pattern. There may be a visible color shift from blue to green or from green to blue as the allergic reaction appears.

Excessive Hyperkeratotic Pattern

These patterns exhibit inflammation, thickening, and elevation that is major and dominated by massive hyperkeratosis and cornification of the surface, which resembles sandpaper texture. The excessive hyperkeratotic pattern appears in red tattoos and nuances of red.

Ultero-Necrotic Pattern

Aggressive inflammation is commonly followed by tissue necrosis and ulceration at any area within the tattoo where the problematic pigment was injected into the skin. Ulceration may affect the full thickness of the dermis and may approach the subcutaneous fat. Necrosis may even extend further into deep tissues and may even affect the regional lymph nodes holding the same pigment. This pattern, especially seen in red tattoos, is a manifestation of a strong allergy. The condition may be self-limiting and may heal over a period of several months. Surgical excision is generally contraindicated.

Lymphopathic Pattern

Excess pigment particles may flow into the lymph vessels to a regional node and may visibly stain the node. Tattoo pigment injected deep into the dermis may also flow into the surrounding skin and produce a visible stain in the direction of the lymph flow. Occasionally, weeks after tattooing, tattooed individuals may have swollen and tender regional lymph nodes, although normally without any sequelae other than pigment deposits in the lymph nodes.

Unregulated Tattoo Ink

Several outbreaks of tattoo-related nontuberculous mycobacterial infections over the past decade were associated with multiple brands of ink. Previously published reports of ink-related infections suggested that tap water used to dilute inks at tattoo parlors was a likely source of contamination.

Findings from the recent outbreak investigations, however, suggest that the inks were contaminated prior to distribution. Of course, manufacturers' responsibility to distribute safe products is an important standard. There is, however, a variety of activities prior to the act of tattooing that may lead to the contamination of ink within the parlor. These activities may be as simple as touching the nozzle of the bottle or as complicated as bacterial growth in bottles of diluted ink used for too long.



Laser Removal Risks

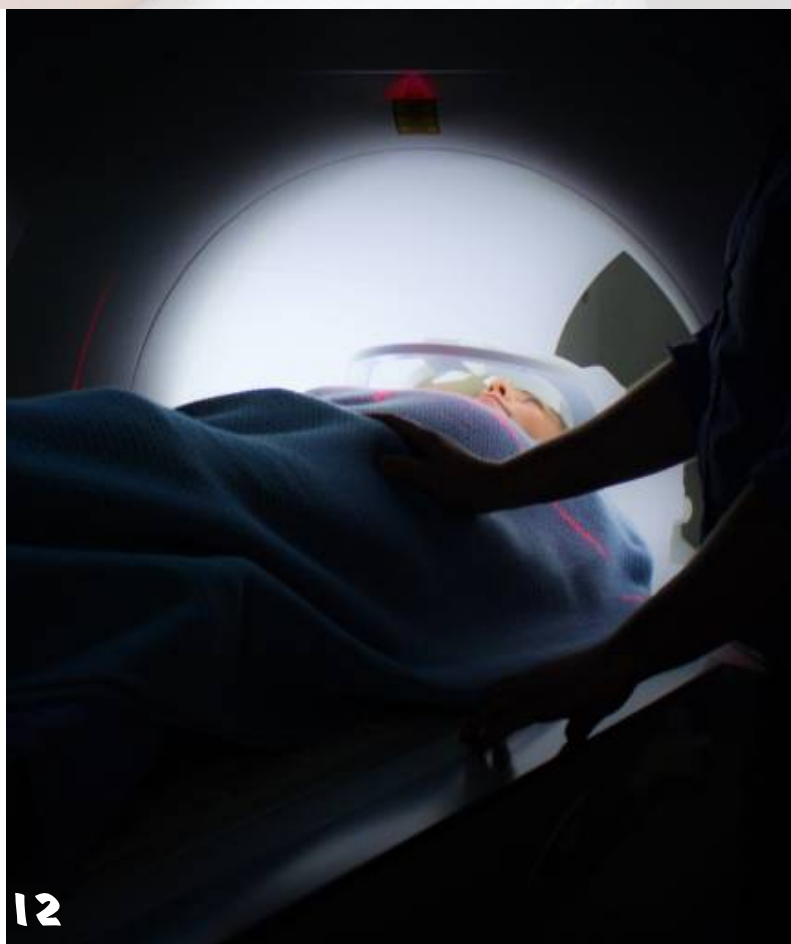
For a long time, tattoo removal was limited to surgical excision or deep abrasion of the skin, inevitably causing scarring and often a need for skin grafting. In the preferred approach now, the tattoo gradually fades away under many months of laser treatments tailored to the wavelength of the pigments. But recent studies have shown that with disruption, the fading tattoo becomes more like a toxic chemical dump. Chemists from several laboratories have identified low levels of carcinogens in tattoo ink. During the laser removal process, pigment is scorched with the use of heat, triggering chemical reactions that generate carcinogenic and mutation-inducing breakdown products, which are then absorbed by the body. And the bigger the tattoo, the greater the toxic release.

Potential laser removal candidates have to be informed about the possible consequences of this removal method in order to make an informed decision.

11

MRI Scan Reactions

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) can interfere with tattoo ink in some cases. Unregulated tattoo inks are reported to contain small fragments of metal. So in this case the magnetic force used in the scanning would pull those fragments and build friction between the particles. A burning painful sensation is caused due to the particles' attempts to break through the skin. The final image of the scanning may also be compromised by the metal fragments in the tattoo area.



12

Prevention

As mentioned throughout the previous point, there are many well-known risks that come with tattoo procedures. The risks however are not presented by the procedure itself but rather by the behavior of persons engaged in it. It is when participants don't take the few risks involved seriously, that tattooing can have negative consequences. All steps involved should be carefully considered to eliminate microbial contamination from the environment (e.g. needles, machines, and other utilities) and also from persons.

The constant maintenance of hygiene is paramount for the success of this service. Cleanliness is of utmost importance to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. Use of disposable gloves and needles as well as surface-wrapping techniques is a must.

Despite the prevalence of adverse tattoo reactions, people with tattoo-related problems infrequently seek help from medical professionals. Instead, they often seek help from tattoo artists. The business has the responsibility of ensuring the candidate's safety throughout the process. Therefore a mandatory tattoo-related skin dangers course would be of great help for artists. It is also important to have after-care advice ready to give after treatment, when the most common incident is infection associated with healing.



What health risks are facing those who engage in the piercing practice?

Body, face and earlobe piercing are common practices today. Minor complications occur frequently and, although rare, major complications have been reported. Complications vary depending on the body-piercing site, materials used, experience of the practitioner, hygiene regimens, and aftercare by the recipient.

General Complications

Infection

Infection is the most common complication and it occurs in up to 20% of all body piercings. Infections are usually localized, although there are a number of reports of life-threatening ones. There is a risk of transmission of communicable disease (e.g hepatitis B, C, D, G) through the piercing procedure.

Allergies

Allergic contact dermatitis is an inflammation of the skin, resulting from direct contact with an allergen. There is a red, scaly, itchy eruption in the area of contact. Nickel, often found in metal jewelry, is the most commonly involved allergen.

Other less common causes of allergic contact dermatitis related to body piercing include local anesthetic and antiseptic creams and ointments, containing diphenhydramine, neomycin or bacitracin.

Loss Of Blood

As a general rule, it is important to avoid antiplatelet agents (aspirin) for 7 days and all other NSAIDs (ibuprofen/naproxen) for at least 1 day before and after any piercing procedure.

Scarring

Any procedure that disrupts the skin deeper than the epidermis leads to a scar. Piercing sites are at risk for hypertrophic and keloid scarring.

Interference With Medical Procedures

Body jewelry may interfere with diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. Images from x-ray, ultrasound, computed tomography, and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) may be distorted by overlying jewelry.

Site-Specific Complications

Mouth

Commonly reported complications of tongue piercing include swelling, difficulty eating, excessive salivation, and pain. These symptoms usually peak during the first 3 days and, in most cases, improve significantly by the end of a week. Proper sizing of jewelry is crucial and initial jewelry should be long enough to allow for swelling.

Eyebrow

The most common complications seen regarding eyebrow piercings are local inflammation and infection. It is recommended that the application of cosmetic products is avoided until the piercing canal has healed.

Nose

Amongst the most common complications of nasal piercings is inflammation, sometimes leading to the embedding of the stud in the nasal mucosa. Piercing of the nasal bridge has resulted in nerve damage as well as bone necrosis related to obstruction of the blood supply.

Ear

Ear piercings go beyond the soft earlobe, as far as 12 types. Cosmetic complications of soft earlobe piercings include tearing and stretching due to heavy jewelry that may even lead to a bifid deformity, and keloid formation.

Nipple

Spreading of infection around breast and chest wall implants is a significant problem in men and women, so nipple piercing is not recommended for anyone with anterior chest implants. Pierced nipples have been reported to swell prior to and during menstruation, even after complete healing.

Navel

Navel piercings can take up to a year to heal and may continuously produce serous ooze, which creates higher chances for superinfection with skin organisms within the area.

Genitals

In men, common piercings involve the glans, urethra, prepuce, and scrotum; in women, the labia, clitoral hood, and clitoral body. All of these are used to increase sexual pleasure. More serious complications include damage to nerves and vessels, infertility and obstruction of the urethra.

Prevention

When it comes to piercing complications, prevention is the key. Extensive consideration of the candidate's health background needs to be taken in account prior to procedures. Specific medical issues (e.g. history of asthma, urticaria, or angioedema) in the case of an oral piercing and healing issues (e.g. predisposition to keloid scarring) need discussion. The candidate should not have open wounds or be anticipating surgical, medical, or dental procedures.

Lifestyle of the candidate must also be considered. Regular participation in contact sports increases the risk of avulsion injuries. Anatomy is also important, since not everyone has the correct anatomy for the piercing that they desire. Hygiene precautions like using aseptic techniques and consistency in sterilizing tools is a must. Clear oral and written aftercare instructions are crucial, (e.g. healing time, wound care, common adverse effects, and means to minimize these).

Studios should provide a brief medical education regarding cause, prevention and treatment of common infection at their piercers' disposal. Candidates should be made aware of the qualifications of their potential piercers.



2. SUCCESSFUL STANDARDS AND PRACTICES IN THE TATTOO STUDIO TO MINIMIZE HEALTH RISKS

The tattoo parlor and the operations involved in practicing tattooing within can help to reduce the risk of infections as much as increase it. A generic description of the organization of a safe tattoo procedure may help upcoming businesses to satisfy customers' needs and make the procedure safe for the end consumer as well as the practitioner.

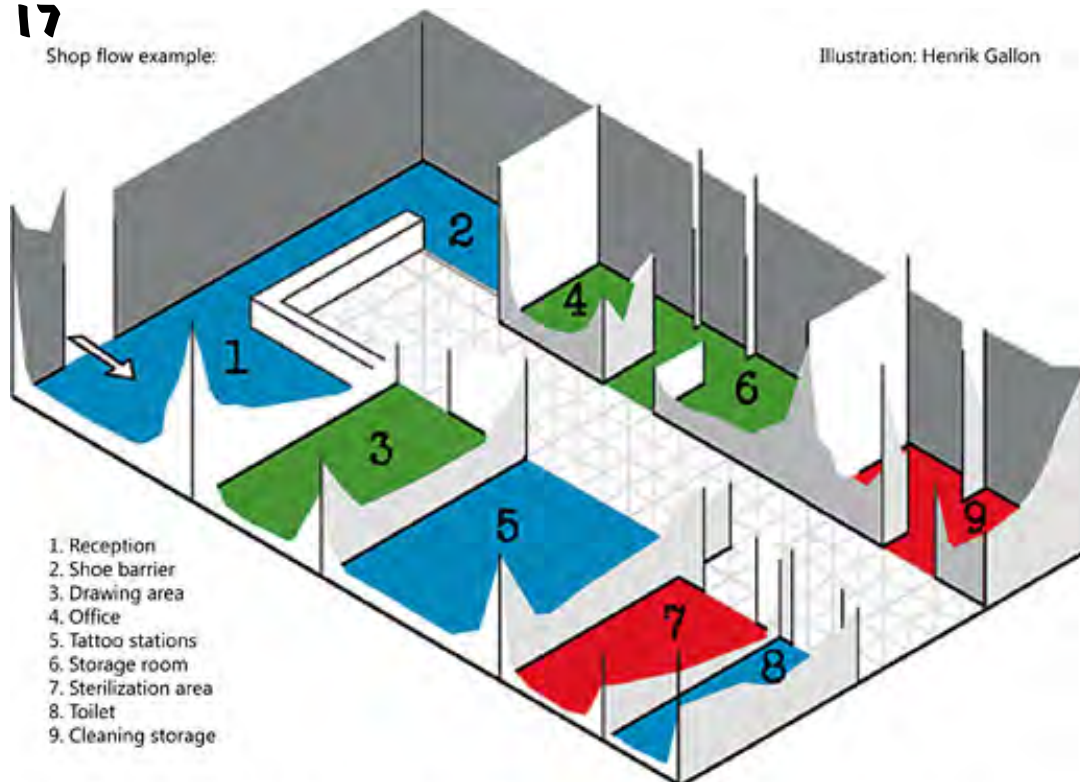
Studio Routines And Area Flow

When it comes to the areas of the shop, it is good to have a clear idea of what each space is for and how it is used. Every tattoo and piercing studio should also be equipped with an autoclave sterilizer, which has to be spore-tested at least once per month. The workstation must be thoroughly considered so that it provides as little risk as possible to work from. The correct management of materials and maintenance of the surfaces are critical to ensure the safety of the working environment. Creating a workable flow in the lounge, workroom, sterile and common areas is the easiest way to ensure a good and safe procedure.

17

Shop flow example:

Illustration: Henrik Gallon



Blue areas are used both by client and by tattooist. These areas have a high level of exposure to potential cross-contamination.

Green areas are not public and are used only by tattooist or other staff.

Red areas should be marked as hazardous areas to be used by staff only.

Materials

The workstation table used as a surface to put the tattoo machines on while performing must be of a material that is easy to wipe clean(e.g. glass or stainless steel). Wood should be avoided due to the relief of tis grain. The customer and the tattooist chairs must be easy to wrap and have a surface texture that is also fairly easy to wipe clean and disinfect. All storage of single-use, sterile, or ultra-clean equipment should be in a dry, dust-free environment. Cabinets with doors are preferable for material storage.

Procedure

Use of purpose-designed disposable gloves when handling contaminated items as well as during the tattoo session is key. Contaminated goods or the tattoo object`s skin should never be touched without gloves.

Of the utmost importance is that all that might be touched over the course of the session must be wrapped in plastic so that the contaminated plastic can then be removed when the work is done. Examples of such objects are tattoo machines, the bottle for skin wash, the power supply, and even the customer's chair. Only sterilized goods must be used on every new customer. Only disposable needles should be used on the customer in every case.



3. DISCOMFORT CAUSE STUDY: PAIN

The tattoo parlor and the operations involved in practicing tattooing within can help to reduce the risk of infections as much as increase it. A generic description of the organization of a safe tattoo procedure may help upcoming businesses to satisfy customers' needs and make the procedure safe for the end consumer as well as the practitioner.

Tattoo Pain Chart

Pain can occur under different sensations during the process of tattooing. The following are the most common types:

Burning: Caused by the combination of the skin's rawness and the repeated trauma from needle piercing over the same area. Irritating, but not intense.

Dull: Reportedly the best kind. Upon the initial prick of the needle to the skin, stress hormones are released, which numb the pain. The dull phase is more likely to last longer if the subject is distracted by another activity during the process.

Scratching: The most common sensation, experienced. Occurs when multiple needles are used for a long time (e.g. shading work).

Stinging: Occurs during the usage of fewer needles (e.g. detail and outline work)

Vibrating: Occurs when the process is carried out in a very bony area and nerves within the bones pick up the vibration of the machine.

Generally, the least painful places to get tattooed are those with the most fat, fewest nerve endings, and thickest skin.

The most painful places to get tattooed are respectively those with the least fat, most nerve endings, and thinnest skin. Therefore bony areas tend to hurt a lot.

Most painful: Armpit, Rib cage, Ankle/Shin, Nipples/Breasts, Groin, Elbows, Kneecap, Back of knee, Neck and Spine, Head/Face/Ears/Lips, Hands/Fingers, Toes/Feet.

Mediocre: Hips, Stomach, Inner bicep.

Least painful: Upper/Outer thigh, Forearm, Outer shoulder, Outer bicep, Calf, Upper/Lower back

How to minimize pain sensation?

Avoid alcohol prior to the session.

Get a good night sleep.

Stay hydrated to keep the skin supple and tight.

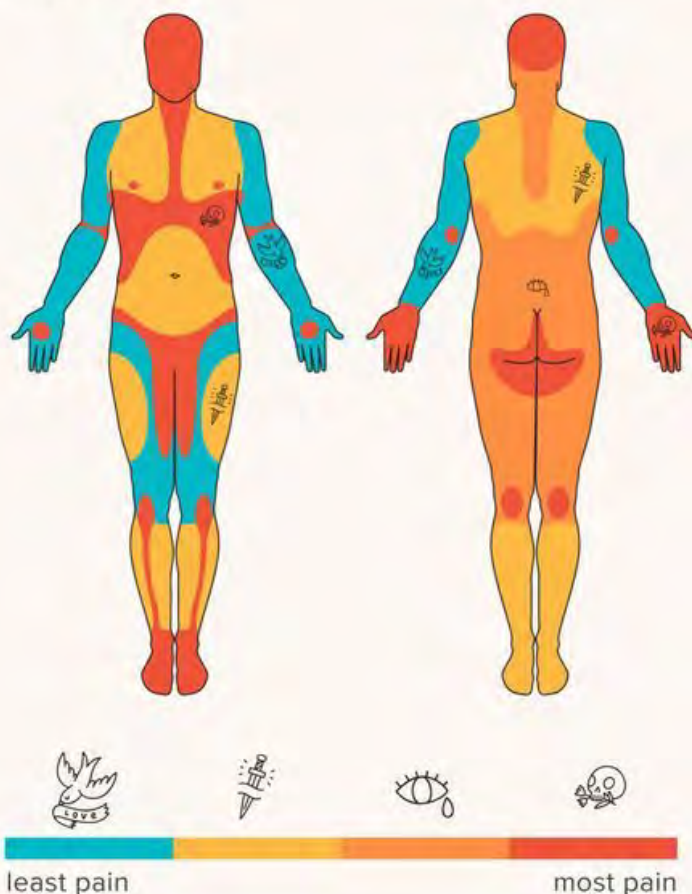
Wear loose clothing to the session.

Take small breaks from the pain.

Follow aftercare instructions.

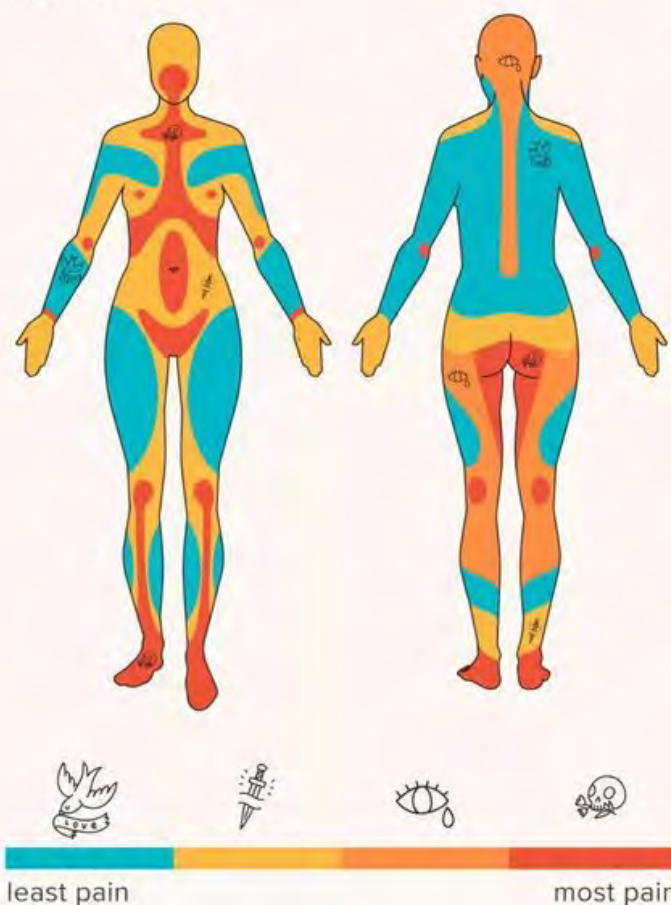
Tattoo pain chart

19



healthline

Tattoo pain chart



healthline

Piercing Pain Chart

A general rule of thumb entails that the fewer nerves in the area, the less pain. The pain is experienced by a stinging sensations which quickly subsides.

Most painful: Erogeous zones (genitals/nipples) actually overstimulate the brain for more intense sensations. Septum nasal can hurt a lot for a short time but heals quickly because the septum is so thin. Dermal ones go directly into your skin and don't come out another end, if thrust through several layers of skin they can prove quite painful.

Least painful: Ears, due to the quick healing of the ear tissue. Naval, where the thick tissue left behind from the umbilical cord is not very nerve dense. Tongue, but exposure to bacteria make infections more likely to occur if not cared after. The Eyebrows area include a few major nerves, so location makes huge difference. The supraorbital nerve makes piercings in the middle much more painful than others.



PRIMARY RESEARCH

HOW TO DELIVER A GREAT TATTOO EXPERIENCE FOR ALL USERS?

To obtain primary research, a qualitative data method is preferred in this case in order to identify exact responses and solutions to the findings, gathered through secondary research.

An interview was conducted with two tattoo artists to compile responses. This involved reaching out to the participants through social media and emailing questions forward. The participants wished to remain anonymous, but decided to share their level of proficiency and experience. Participant (1) has been a self-taught tattoo artist for 3 years working with private clients from the comfort of his own studio, while Participant (2) has been a professional tattooist in a studio parlor for 5 years.

The interview questions are split into two sections. The first section aims to build up responses on secondary research findings, regarding health risks awareness, prevention, occurrence, diagnosis, report and treatment. The second section consists of predominantly open questions in hopes of gathering professionals' opinions on the importance of experience and design consideration for interior improvement.

The responses will help identify the relevance of previously identified issues and explore potential solutions.



RESPONSES

Diving into the first section, both participants reported having encountered some sort of skin complication in their experience as tattooist, when asked how likely their occurrence is. However, both participants haven't dealt with serious complication regarding the healing process, having taken necessary precautions at each stage

"Complication can occur from time to time. Sometimes the skin of the canvas can cause difficulties, sometimes their pain tolerance is too low. I used to have problems with my coil machine, but recently I bought a new one which makes my life better. Complications are inevitable but practice makes perfect and the more experience you have, the easier the work flow is."(1)

"I haven't had any complaints related to the healing process. No one has ever got an allergic reaction or scarring of any sort. Some of the first tattoos I ever did have partially faded away, which is the opposite of a blowout. Blowouts occur when the needle penetrates deeper than the second layer of the skin. The only blowouts I have done are on my body, but it is much more difficult to tattoo yourself."(2)

Previously having drawn upon the importance of artists' knowledge in skin complications treatment, a few questions were aimed at the participants' confidence in dealing with such issues. Neither felt knowledgeable or responsible enough to treat more serious reactions.

"I am still quite new to the world of tattooing and I don't have all the knowledge to deal with problems I haven't encountered, so if someone tells me they've got an allergic reaction I would need to do some researching first."(1)

"Sometimes I forget to ask about preexisting skin conditions. But I also think I expect the client to let me know if there is anything to worry about."If I see a mole I don't go over it when I'm tattooing but I am also not a dermatologist, it's not my job to examine the client's skin.(2)

When asked whether they would refer clients with reactions they don't feel confident enough to help treat to medical professionals, the participants had different responses.

"Not very likely, but if something has seriously gone wrong, I wouldn't hesitate to do so."(1)

"I would probably do some research on my own firstly. Only if I still feel uncomfortable giving my advice after that, will I refer a client to someone else."(2)

After those initial responses identifying a lack of confidence, when asked whether they would engage in a medical skin program if it was offered to tattooists, the participants had uniform answers.

"I am completely self-thought and have not participated in any formal training. However I definitely see a need for something of the sort within the community and would definitely participate if it was offered to me." (1)

"I received a very brief training during my apprenticeship, very rough around the edges. It didn't really offer me much, but if I was given an opportunity to get a dermatologist's advice now after I have been in the scene for a while, it would deffinitely prove useful."(2)

The secondary research findings shed light on the vast importance of hygiene and principles involved in the procedure. The participants had very strong opinions on the subject.

"As I said I haven't had any complaints from clients thus far and I think this is mostly due to the fact that I always take the necessary precautions. For the clients' safety sure, but also for my own. Disinfecting the surfaces regularly is the most important step in my routine."(1)

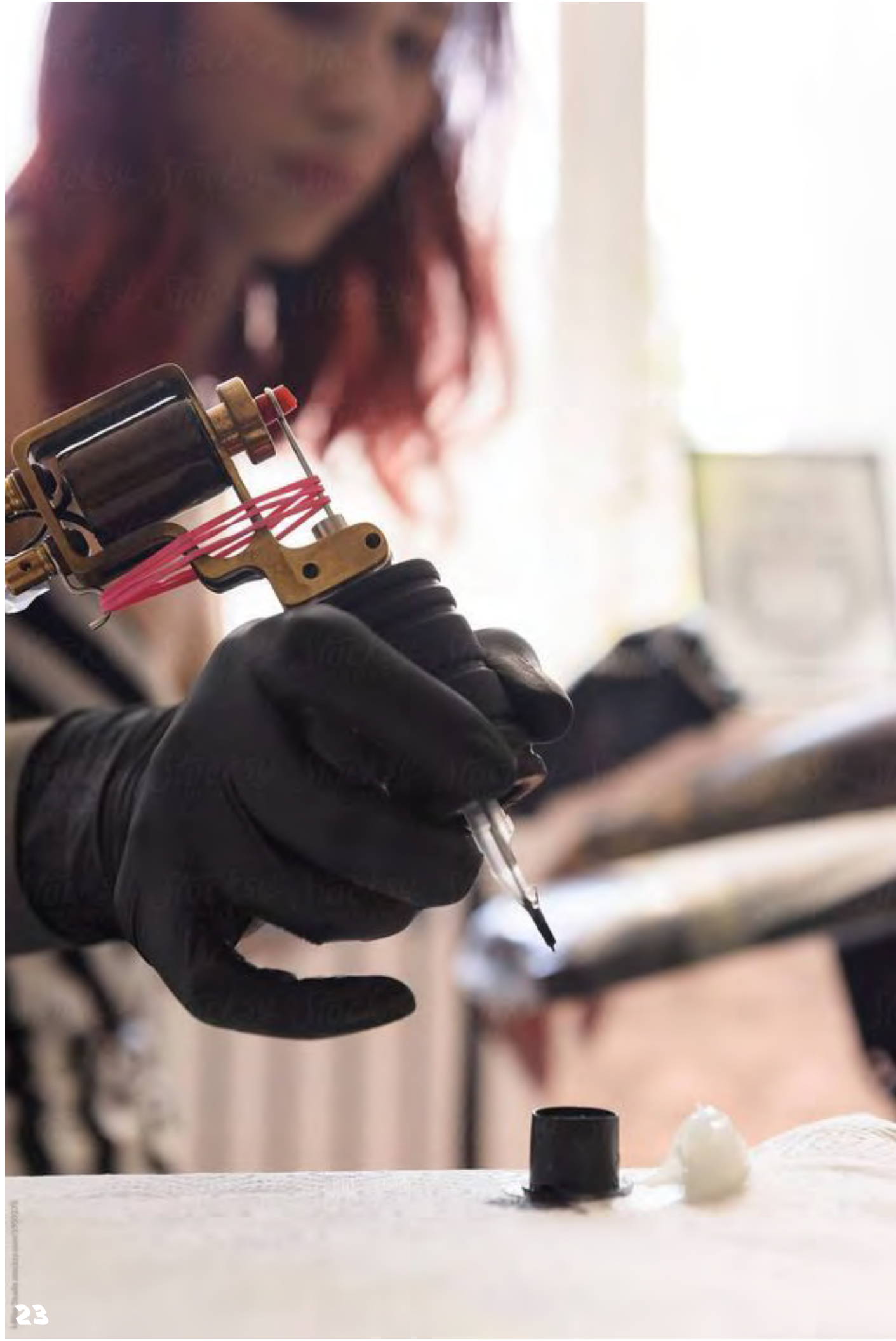
"Hygiene and maintenance are essential in the tattoo process. Using single-use needles and gloves is obvious, but wrapping surfaces, sterilizing materials, using clear water and general maintenance are just as crucial."(2)

The second section of the questions were formed more along the lines of the experience between the artist and client, and the influence of the environment on that experience.

"People connect emotions to memories, so if the client had a pleasant experience, chances are they would like their tattoo even if it's not the best. So yes, I believe the process is as important as the end result."(1)

"I like to connect with my clients on a personal level. We have a chat, smoke a cigarette. For me it is important to make them feel comfortable beforehand, rather than diving straight into the poking and stabbing."(2)

In response to questions, regarding clients' ways of dealing with the discomfort of the process, the participants agreed it can sometimes affect the quality of their work or focus, resulting in a mediocre result.



"Once I tattooed a friend of mine who wouldn't stop screaming and if he wasn't screaming, he would tell me which line to do next. Eventually he said that he could no longer bear the pain and walked away, not letting me finish the tattoo. The best way for a client to cope in my experience is to trust the artist."(1)

"Nerves can cause a problem if the canvas starts having ticks or decides to leave before the tattoo is finished. I think communication is key in this case. I don't mind a chatty client. If I am too concentrated in the work, I will just let them speak and nod every now and then, I would never tell them to shut up."(2)

When it comes to the environment's influence the participants' suggestions proved be crucial to the understanding of their experience When asked how the environment can contribute to customer experience, a very detailed response was made.

"Tattoos are still perceived as something dangerous, so you definitely don't want to find yourself in a dirty basement. The argument that I made earlier about the whole process being important is valid here as well. The environment needs to be prepossessing. A warm cozy atmosphere or a bright clean studio would make a person feel more relaxed and secure, than a dark room, full of heavy metal symbols."(1)

Engaging the senses is seen as a powerful tactic in interior design for both elevating the experience and creating distraction. When asked whether such a tactic would prove useful in a tattoo setting the reply was very affirmative.

"Most definitely. Each and every one of the senses adds up to the way we perceive and experience. For example, my older tattoo guns are extremely loud, and the noise unsettled my clients. This applies for all the other senses too."(2)



Tattooing is a very skill-dependent service and relies on meticulous movement. Any discomfort to the artist or the client can potentially compromise the quality of the art. When asked what they consider essential in the workstation, both participants agreed on a singular life-changing commodity.

"From my experience light is absolutely essential and is much more important than a comfortable chair, so a space needs to be well illuminated first, and furnishing comes second."(2)

Tattoo and piercing studios are associated with a very distinct look. A heavily-decorated interior with flash art on the walls, grungy rough materials, cluttering decoration in the form of skulls and other artifacts in order to communicate its rebellious and punk nature. This iconic style made way for more minimalistic and relaxed interior in recent years. Artists' opinions on this matter are especially valuable because their relationship to the culture and influences behind tattooing is often painted in respect.

"I think this way of decorating is old-fashioned and there are better ways to design your studio, but you would want your workspace to represent what you are about, so it would make sense for a tattoo shop that specializes in old-school traditional tattoos, to appear old-school and traditional."(2)

"I think every good idea can be executed badly but, overall, I appreciate all attempts to modernize something."(1)

ANALYSIS

The responses from the interview provided really qualitative data, regarding the necessities and further improvements regarding user experience in tattoo businesses. Both participants with provided their honest individual opinions to conclude a very clear, straightforward list of current issues, solutions and improvements concerning the tattoo industry. This list confirmed most secondary research findings and can be referred to in future projects as an informative handbook for tattoo and piercing interior design essentials.



25



26

86



CONCLUSION

Studies report that over 40 % of young adults worldwide have at least one tattoo.

The tattoo and piercing industry has seen demands of this service sky-rocket over recent years. More and more adults look for a way to mark their bodies with art in the ultimate form of self-expression. While the benefits of going through this process of self-exploration are getting recognized, the disadvantages are still present. The various health risks associated with the procedures are still fueling prejudices and stigma towards those who participate in the tattooing process. The risks however are not presented by the procedure itself, but by the behaviour of individuals engaged in it. Awareness of the risks, education in precautions, diagnosis and treatments as well discipline in obeying hygiene standards has to be introduced on a ground basis for the risks to be reduced to the minimum.

Tattooing and piercing is not just about the end product, The tattoo is the only piece of art meant for life. Therefore, the act of receiving such is an extremely intimate experience. Any chance this experience can be improved has to be taken in search of improvement. This experience needs to be tailor-designed for the artist, just as well as for the customer.

The environment is presented with the challenge of suiting to each side's necessities only to meet in the middle and create a meaningful connection between both. Only with this holistic approach to the design of the interior a safe and comfortable tattoo environment can be realized. Once physical and psychological safety and comfort is achieved in users' minds, the overall experience can be elevated to meet modern users' desires.

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APPENDIX

Interview With A Tattoo Artist

SINGULAR TARGET:

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

SEX: male

AGE: 22

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

PROFESSIONAL STATUS: Self-employed

TATTOO EXPERIENCE: 3 y.

1. Skin Care in the Tattoo Parlor.

1. What made you interested in performing tattoos and how long have you been engaging in this activity?

I've been into the tattoo aesthetic ever since I first saw one and was initially more interested in getting tattooed, rather than tattooing, but I always look for a way to expand my artistic skills, so it was the natural course of events for me, even though my brother is the one to blame, as he gave me my first tattoo gun around three years ago.

2. How long have you been tattooing others for?

I first tattooed some fruits, then I tattooed myself, and then I began tattooing other folk, so I've been doing it for roughly three years.

! 3. Have you ever observed an adverse tattoo reaction, related to a tattoo performed by yourself or another artist?

Once I tattooed a friend of mine who wouldn't stop screaming and if he wasn't screaming, he would tell me which line to do next... Eventually he said that he could no longer bear the pain and walked away, not letting me finish the tattoo.

4. If not, how often would say it is likely for complications to occur?

Complication can occur from time to time. Sometimes the skin of the canvas can cause difficulties, sometimes their pain tolerance is too low. I used to have problems with my coil machine, but recently I bought a new one which makes my life better. Complications are inevitable but practice makes perfect and the more experience you have, the easier the workflow is.

5. Which of these have you observed: color-specific reaction, hypersensitivity/allergy, abnormal healing, scarring, photosensitivity, infection, subdermal dispersion of ink or "blowout" or pimples?

I haven't had any complaints related to the healing process. No one has ever got an allergic reaction or scarring of any sort. Some of the first tattoos I ever did have partially faded away, which is the opposite of a blowout. Blowouts occur when the needle penetrates deeper than the second layer of the skin. The only blowouts I have done are on my body, but it is much more difficult to tattoo yourself.

! 6. Do clients who have experienced complications come to you for advice?

Clients do come to me for advice, but as I said there haven't been any complications of such nature.

! 7. How confident do you feel advising clients on how to treat skin complications?

I am still quite new to the world of tattooing and I don't have all the knowledge to deal with problems I haven't encountered, so if someone tells me they've got an allergic reaction I would need to do some researching first.

8. How confident do you feel advising clients on the risks of receiving tattoos in the first place?

This is something I am more knowledgeable about, so I would feel confident.

! 9. How likely are you to refer clients to medical professionals?

Not very likely, but if something has seriously gone wrong, I wouldn't hesitate to do so.

! 10. Do you ask clients if they have a preexisting skin condition before giving tattoos?

Sometimes, but I don't always remember to ask about preexisting skin conditions. But I also think I expect the client to let me know if there is anything to worry about.

! 11. Do you ever look for atypical moles on clients' skin?

I am not a dermatologist. I don't go over any moles when I'm tattooing but it's not my job to examine the client's skin.

! 12. Do you give clients clear aftercare instructions or handouts?

Yes, I do.

! 13. Have you ever engaged in formal training or any academically approved reading material about skin conditions related to tattooing?

I am completely self-thought and have not participated in a formal training.

! 14. Would you be interested in additional training of this sort if it is offered to you?

Yes, I would.

! 15. Have you ever thought of specific questions you might ask a dermatologist?

No.

! 16. Do you sometimes feel like your own health is endangered, by being exposed to blood and other bodily fluids? Have you thought that perhaps accidental needlestick injuries can be quite common?

I have thought about the possible dangers, but I take the necessary precautions and prefer to focus on creating quality work.

17. Do you think health inspectors should be authorized to access registered studios, identify and issue warning for possible unsafe conditions?

Yes.

! 18. What are in your opinion the most effective precautions the environment and artist can take to prevent skin complications from occurring before, during and after tattoo treatments?

Disinfecting the surfaces is the most important step to maintain a good hygiene.

2. How to Elevate the Experience of Receiving Tattoos?

! 19. How important do you think a good time with the artist is to clients? Is it just about the end product or also the experience over the process?

People connect emotions to memories, so if the client had a pleasant experience, chances are they would like their tattoo even if it's not the best. So yes, I believe the process is as important as the end result.

! 20. What makes a great tattoo experience for a client and how can artists contribute?

I like to connect with my clients on a personal level. We have a chat, smoke a cigarette. For me it is important to make them feel comfortable beforehand, rather than diving straight into the poking and stabbing.

21. How can clients themselves contribute to a great experience?

The best thing a client can do is trust the artist.

! 22. How can the environment contribute to a great experience?

Tattoos are still perceived as something dangerous, so you definitely don't want to find yourself in a dirty basement. The argument that I made earlier about the whole process being important is valid here as well. The environment needs to be prepossessing. A warm cozy atmosphere or a bright clean studio would make a person feel more relaxed and secure, than a dark room, full of heavy metal symbols.

! 23. Do clients get so nervous or uncomfortable to the point where their actions compromise the quality of your work?

Nerves can cause a problem if the canvas starts having ticks or decides to leave before the tattoo is finished.

! 24. Do you feel comfortable if clients keep engaging in conversation with you while you tattoo them or do you prefer a bit of quiet?

I don't mind a chatty client. If I am too concentrated in the work, I will just let them speak and nod every now and then.

! 25. How can artists and the environment prevent clients from passing out, keep them distracted from the pain and generally relaxed?

This is not something the artist has too much control over. People take pain differently and the best you can do is let the client have a break when they need it.

! 26. Do you think techniques that engage with the senses(smell/hearing/touch) in order to relax or distract clients can be helpful in the working environment?

Most definitely. Each and every one of the senses adds up to the way we perceive and experience. For example, my previous tattoo gun was extremely loud, and the noise unsettled my clients. This applies for all the other senses too.

! 27. Most traditional tattoo parlors clutter their space with decorative elements to immerse clients into the culture of tattooing. Do you think this style of furnishing is necessary to make the space recognizable as a tattoo studio and could it be too overwhelming for some clients?

I think this way of decorating is old-fashioned and there are better ways to design your studio, but you would want your workspace to represent what you are about, so it would make sense for a tattoo shop that specializes in old-school traditional tattoos, to appear old-school and traditional.

! 28. Modern tattoo parlors approach their spaces in a more minimalistic approach in hopes of making clients feel calmer and in maintaining hygiene and order more effectively. Do you think this approach is successful, or does it by distancing itself from the culture appear “clinical”?

I think every good idea can be executed badly but, overall, I appreciate the attempts to modernize something.

! 30. What do you consider essential points in the workspace which stimulate your comfort and quality of work?

From my experience light is absolutely essential and is much more important than a comfortable chair, so a space needs to be well illuminated first, and furnishing comes second.

! 31. What are tattoo studios missing at the moment to make artists more satisfied with the space?

I have only worked from home, so I am not prepared to answer that question but from what I've seen, tattoo studios are pretty well equipped.